B. M. Corrigan.



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THE RULE OF THE MONK.

VOL. I.

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THE

RULE OF THE MONK;

OR,

Rome in the Nineteenth Century.

BY

GENERAL GARIBALDI.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

CASSELL, PETTER, AND GALPIN,
LONDON AND NEW YORK.

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INTRODUCTION.

The renowned writer of Cæsar's "Commentaries" did not think it necessary to furnish a preface for those notable compositions; and, in truth, the custom is altogether of modern times. The ancient heroes who became authors and wrote a book, left their work to speak for itself—"to sink or swim," we had almost said, but that is not exactly the case. Cæsar carried those very "Commentaries" between his teeth when he swam ashore from the sinking galley at Alexandria; but it never occurred to him to supply posterity with a prefatory flourish. With a soldierly brevity he begins those famous chapters at the beginning—"*Omnis Gallia in tres partes*," &c.

The world has been contented to begin there with him, for the last two thousand years; and the fact is a great precedent against prefaces—especially since, as a rule, no one ever reads them till the book itself has been perused.

The renowned soldier who has here turned author, entering the literary arena among the novelists, has also given his English translators no preface. But custom expects one, and the nature of the present work especially requires that a few words should be written explanatory of the original purpose and character of the Italian MSS. from which the subjoined pages are transcribed. It would be unfair to Garibaldi if the undoubted vivacity and grace of his native style should be thought to be here accurately represented. The famous champion of freedom possesses an eloquence as peculiar and real as his military genius; with a gift of graphic description and

creative fancy which are but imperfectly rendered in this version of his tale, partly from the particular circumstances under which the version was prepared, and partly from the impossibility of rendering into English those subtle touches and personal traits which really make a book, as light and shadows make a countenance. Moreover, the Italian MS. itself, written throughout in the autograph of the General, was compiled not for a studied work, but as the solace of heavy hours at Varignano, where the King of Italy, who owed to Garibaldi's sword the splendid present of the Two Sicilies, was repaying that magnificent dotation with a shameful imprisonment. The time will come when these pages—in their original, at least—will be numbered among historic proofs of the poet's statement that

> "Stone walls do not a prison make,
> Nor iron bars a cage:
> Minds innocent and quiet take
> These for a hermitage."

And if there be many passages in the narrative where the signs are strong that "the iron has entered into the soul," there are also a hundred where the spirit of the good and brave General goes forth from his insulting incarceration to revel in scenes of natural beauty—to recall incidents of simple human love and kindness—to dwell upon heroic memories, and to aspire towards glorious developments of humanity; made free, like that other apostle, when the angel of the Lord struck off his fetters, and he passed forth from the self-opened portals of his prison.

It would be manifestly unfair to compare a work written under such conditions to those elaborate specimens of modern novel-writing with which our libraries abound. Probably, had General Garibaldi ever read such productions, he would have declined to accept them as a model. He appears to have taken up here the easy form of the "novella," which belongs by right of in-

vention to his language and his country. His story is told simply as a convenient way of imparting to his readers and to posterity the real condition and inner life of Rome during these last few eventful years, when the evil power of the Papacy has been declining to its fall. Whereas, therefore, most novels consist of fiction founded upon fact, this one may be defined rather as fact founded upon fiction, in the sense that the form alone and the cast of the story are fanciful—the rest being all pure truth lightly disguised. Garibaldi has here recited—with nothing more than a thin veil of incognito thrown over those names which it would have been painful or perilous to make known—that of which he himself has been cognisant as matters of fact in the wicked city of the priests, where the power which has usurped the gentle name of Christ blasphemes Him with a greater audacity of word and a

more frenzied folly in act as the hour of judgment approaches. Herein the reader may see what goes forward in those demure palaces of the princes of the Church, from which the "Vicegerents of Heaven" are elected. Herein he may comprehend what kind of a system it is which French bayonets still defend — what the private life is of those who denounce humanity and anathematise science; and why Romans appear content with the government of Jesuits, and the privilege of hearing the Pope's artificial *altos* at the Sistine Chapel. He who has composed this narrative, at once so idyllic in its pastoral scenes—so tender and poetic in its domestic passages — so Metastasio-like in some of its episodes—and so terribly earnest in its denunciation of the wrongs and degradation of the Eternal City, is no unknown satirist. He is GARIBALDI; he has been Dictator in the Seven-hilled City,

and Generalissimo of her army; her archives have lain within his hands; he has held her keys, and fought upon her walls; and, in four campaigns at least, since those glorious but mournful days, he has waged battle for the ancient City in the open field. Here, then, is his description of "Rome in the Nineteenth Century"—not seen as tourists or dilettanti see her, clothed with the imaginary robes of her historic and colossal empire—but seen naked to the scourged and branded skin—affronted, degraded, defamed, bleeding from the hundred wounds where the leech-like priests hang and suck, who, by their vile organisation, have converted the Rome which was mistress of the world to a Rome which is the emporium of solemn farces, miracle-plays, superstitious hypocrisies—the capital of an evil instead of a majestic kingdom—the metropolis of monks, instead of Cæsars.

To this discrowned Queen of Nations every page in the present volume testifies the profound and ardent loyalty of Garibaldi's soul. The patriotism which most men feel towards the country of their birth is but a cold virtue compared with the burning devotion which fills the spirit of our warrior-novelist. It is as though the individuality of some antique Cato or Fabius was resuscitated, to protest, with deed and word, against the false and cunning tribe who have suborned the imperial city to their purposes, and turned the monuments of Rome, as it were, into one Cloaca Maxima. The end of these things is probably approaching, although His Holiness, parodying the great Councils of past history, pretends to be as God, and to give laws *urbi et orbi*, while the kingdoms reject his authority, and his palace is only defended from the people by the aid of foreign bayonets. When Rome is freed

from the Pope-king, and has been proclaimed the capital of Italy, this book will be one of the memorials of that extraordinary corruption and offence which the nineteenth century endured so long and patiently.

The Author's desire to portray the state of society in Rome and around it, during the last years of the Papacy, has been clearly paramount; and the narrative only serves as the form for this design. Accordingly, the reader must not expect an elaborately compiled plot, with artistic developments. He will, nevertheless, be sincerely interested in the fortunes and the fates of the beautiful and virtuous Roman ladies who figure in the tale—of the gallant and dashing brigand of the Campagna, Orazio—the handsome Muzio—the brave and faithful Attilio, and the Author's evident favourite, "English Julia," whose share in the story enables the soldier of the people

to exhibit his excessive affection for England and the English people. It only remains to commend these various heroes and heroines to the public, with the remark that the deficiencies of the work are due rather to the translation than to the original; for the vigour and charm of the great Liberator's Italian is such as to show that he might have rivalled Manzoni or Alfieri, if he had not preferred to emulate the Gracchi and Rienzi.

THE RULE OF THE MONK.

CHAPTER I.

CLELIA.

A CELEBRATED writer has called Rome "the city of the dead;" but how can there be death in the heart of Italy? The ruins of Rome, the ashes of her unhappy sons, have, indeed, been entombed, but these remains are so impregnated with life that they may yet accomplish the regeneration of the world! Rome is still capable of arousing the populations, as the tempest raises the waves of the sea; for was she not the mistress of ancient empire, and is not her whole history that of giants? Those who can visit her wonderful monuments in their present desolation, and not feel their souls kindle with love of the beautiful, and ardour for gene-

rous designs, will only restore at death base hearts to their original clay. As with the city, so with its people. No degradations have been able to impair the beauty of her daughters—a loveliness often, alas! fatal to themselves—and in the youthful Clelia, the artist's daughter of the Trastevere, Raffaele himself would have found the graces of his lofty and pure Madonna, united with that force of character which distinguished her illustrious namesake of Roman times. Even at sixteen years of age her carriage possessed majestic dignity as of a matron of old, albeit so youthful; her hair was of a luxurious rich brown; her dark eyes, generally conveying repose and gentleness, could, nevertheless, repress the slightest affront with flashes like lightning. Her father was a sculptor, named Manlio, who had reached his fiftieth year, and possessed a robust constitution, owing to a laborious and sober life. This profession enabled him to support his family in comfort, if not luxury, and he was altogether as independent as it was possible for a citizen to be

in a priest-ridden country. Manlio's wife, though naturally healthy, had become delicate from early privation and confinement to the house; she had, however, the disposition of an angel, and besides being the happiness and pride of her husband, was beloved by the entire neighbourhood.

Clelia was their only child, and was entitled by the people, "The Pearl of Trastevere." She inherited, in addition to her beauty, the angelic heart of her mother, with that firmness and strength of character which marked her father.

This happy family resided in the street that ascends from Sungora to Monte Gianicolo, not far from the fountain of Mortoro, and, unfortunately for them, they lived there in this, the nineteenth century, when the power of the Papacy is, for the time, supreme.

Now, the Pope professes to regard the Bible as the word of God, yet the Papal throne is surrounded by cardinals, to whom marriage is forbidden, notwithstanding the Scriptural declaration that "it is

not good that man should be alone," and that woman was formed to be "an helpmeet for him."

Matrimony being thus interdicted, contrary to the law of God and man, the enormous wealth, the irresponsible power, and the state of languid luxury in which, as Princes of the Church, they are compelled to live, have ever combined, in the case of these cardinals, to present every temptation to corruption and libertinism of the very worst kinds.* As the spirit of the master always pervades the household, plenty of willing tools are to be found in the large establishments of the Church princes ready to pander to their employers' vices.

The beauty of Clelia had unhappily attracted the eye of Cardinal Procopio, the most powerful of these prelates, and the favourite of his Holiness; whom he flattered to his face, and laughed at as an old dotard behind his back.

Jaded by his enforced attendance at the

* See Note 1.

Vatican, he one day summoned Gianni, one of his creatures, to his presence, and informed him of the passion he had conceived for Clelia, ordering him, at whatever cost, and by any means, to obtain possession of the girl, and conduct her to his palace.

It was in furtherance of the nefarious plot thereupon concocted that the agent of his Eminence, on one evening early in February, presented himself at the studio of Signor Manlio, but not without some trepidation, for, like most of his class, he was an arrant coward, and already in fancy trembled at the terrific blows which the strong arm of the sculptor would certainly bestow should the real object of the visit be suspected. He was, however, somewhat reassured by the calm expression of the Roman's face, and, plucking up courage, he entered the studio.

"Good evening, Signor Manlio," he commenced, with a smooth and flattering voice.

"Good evening," replied the artist, not

looking up, but continuing an examination of his chisels, for he cared little to encourage the presence of an individual whom he recognised as belonging to the household of the Cardinal, the character of whose establishment was only too well known to him.

"Good evening, Signor," repeated Gianni, in a timid voice; and, observing that at last the other raised his head, he thus continued—"his Eminence, the Cardinal Procopio, desires me to tell you he wishes to have two small statues of saints to adorn the entrance to his oratory."

"And of what size does the Cardinal require them?" asked Manlio.

"I think it would be better for you, Signor, to call on his Eminence at the palace, to see the position in which he wishes them to be placed, and then consult with him respecting their design."

A compression of the sculptor's lips showed that this proposal was but little to his taste; but how can an artist exist in Rome, and maintain his family in comfort,

without ecclesiastical protection and employment? One of the most subtle weapons used by the Roman Church has always been its patronage of the fine arts.* It has ever employed the time and talent of the first Italian masters to model statues, and execute paintings from subjects calculated to impress upon the people the doctrines inculcated by its teaching, receiving demurely the homage of Christendom for its "protection of genius," and the encouragement it thereby afforded to artists from all nations to settle in Rome.

Manlio, therefore, who would have sacrificed his life a hundred times over for his two beloved ones, after a few moments' reflection, bluntly answered, "I will go." Gianni, with a profound salutation, retired. "The first step is taken," he murmured; "and now I must endeavour to find a safe place of observation for Cencio." This fellow was a subordinate of Gianni's, to whom the Cardinal had entrusted the second section of the enterprise; and for

* See Note 2.

whom it was now necessary to hire a room in sight of the studio. This was not difficult to achieve in that quarter, for in Rome, where the priests occupy themselves with the spiritual concerns of the people, and but little with their temporal prosperity (though they never neglect their own), poverty abounds.* Were it not for the enforced neglect of its commerce, the ancient activity of Rome might be restored, and might rival even its former palmiest days.

Having engaged a room suitable for the purpose, Gianni returned home, humming a song, and with a conscience anything but oppressed; comprehending well that absolution could be easily obtained from the priests for any ruffianism, when committed for the benefit of Mother Church.

* See Note 3.

CHAPTER II.

ATTILIO.

In the same street, and opposite Manlio's house, was another studio, occupied by an artist, named Attilio, already of some celebrity, although he had only attained his twentieth year. In it he worked the greater part of the day; but, studious as he was, he found himself unable to refrain from glancing lovingly, from time to time, at the window on the first floor, where Clelia was generally occupied with her needle, seated by her mother's side. Without her knowledge—almost without his own—she had become for him the star of his sky, the loveliest among the beauties of Rome—his hope, his life, his all. Now, Attilio had watched with a penetrating eye the manner in which the emissary of the Cardinal had come and gone. He saw him looking doubtful and irresolute, and,

with the quick instincts of love, a suspicion of the truth entered his mind; a terrible fear for the safety of his beloved took possession of him. When Gianni quitted Manlio's house, Attilio stole forth, following cautiously in his footsteps, but stopping now and then to elude observation by gazing at the curiosities in the shop windows, or at the monuments which one encounters at every turn about the Eternal City; clutching involuntarily, now and then, at the dagger carefully concealed in his breast, especially when he saw Gianni enter a house, and heard him bargain for the use of a room.

Not until Gianni reached the magnificent Palazzo Corsini, where his employer lived, and had disappeared therein from sight, did Attilio turn aside.

"Then it is Cardinal Procopio," muttered he to himself; "Procopio, the Pope's favourite—the vilest and most licentious of the evil band of Church Princes!"—and he continued his gloomy reflections without heeding whither his steps went.

CHAPTER III.

THE CONSPIRACY.

It is the privilege of the slave to conspire against his oppressors—for liberty is God's gift, and the birthright of all. Therefore Italians of the past and present days, under their various servitudes, have constantly conspired; and, as the despotism of the tiaraed priests is the most hateful and degrading of all, so the conspiracies of the Romans date thickest from that rule. We are asked to believe that the government of the Pope is mild—that his subjects are contented, and have ever been so. Yet, if this be true, how is it that they who claim to be the representatives of Christ upon earth—of Him who said, "My kingdom is not of this world"—have, since the institution of the temporal power, supplicated French intervention sixteen times, German intervention fifteen times, Austrian intervention

seven times, and Spanish intervention three times, while the Pope of our day holds his throne only by means of the intervention of a foreign power?

So the night of the 8th February was a night of conspiracy. The meeting-hall was no other than the ancient Colosseum; and Attilio, instead of returning home, aroused himself to a recollection of this fact, and set out for the Campo Vaccino.

The night was obscure, and black clouds were gathering on all sides, impelled by a violent scirocco. The mendicants, wrapped in their rags, sought shelter from the wind in the stately old doorways; others in porches of churches. Indoors, the priests were sitting, refreshing themselves at sumptuous tables loaded with viands and exquisite wines. Beggars without and priests within—for of these two classes the population is chiefly composed. But those conspirators watch for and anticipate the day when priests and beggars shall be consigned alike to the past.

By-and-by, in the distance beyond, the

ancient forum—that majestic giant of ruins —rose upon young Attilio's eyes, dark and alone. It stands there, reminding a city of slaves of the hundred past generations of grandeur which it survives above the ruins of their capital; to tell them that, though she has been shaken down to the dust of shame and death, she is not dead—not lost to the nations which her civilisation and her glories created and regenerated.

In that sublime ruin our conspirators gather. A stranger generally chooses a fine moonlight night on which to visit the Colosseum; but it is in darkness and storm that it should rather be seen, illuminated terribly by the torches of lightning, while the thunder of heaven reverberates through every ragged arch.

Such were the accompaniments of the scene when the conspirators, on that February night, entered stealthily, and one by one, the ancient arena of the gladiators.

Among its thousand divisions, where the sovereign people were wont to assemble in the days when they were corrupted by

the splendours of the conquered world, were several more spacious than others, such as were probably destined for the patricians and great functionaries, but which time, with exterminating touch, has reduced to one scarce distinguishable mass of ruin. Neither chairs nor couches now adorn them, but blocks of weather-beaten stone mark the boundaries, benches, and chambers. In one of these behold our conspirators silently assembling, scanning each other narrowly by the aid of their dark lanterns, as they advance into the space by different routes, their only ceremony being a grasp of the hand upon arriving at the Loggione—a name given by them to the ruined enclosure. Soon a voice is heard asking the question, "Are the sentries at their posts?" Another voice, from the extreme end, replies, "All's well." Immediately the flame of a torch, kindled near the first speaker, lighted up hundreds of intelligent faces, mostly young, and the greater number those of men decidedly under thirty years of age.

Here and there began now to gleam other torches, vainly struggling to conquer the darkness of the night. The priests are never in want of spies, and adroit spies they themselves make too. Under such circumstances it might appear to a foreigner highly imprudent for a band of conspirators to assemble in any part of Rome; but be it remembered deserts are to be found in this huge city, and the Campo Vaccino covers a space in which all the famous ruins of western Europe might be enclosed. Besides, the mercenaries of the Church love their skins above all things, and render service more for the sake of lucre than zeal. They are by no means willing at any time to risk their cowardly lives. Again, there are not wanting, according to such superstitious knaves, legions of apparitions among these remains. It is recorded that once, on a night like that which we are describing, two spies, more daring than their fellows, having perceived a light, proceeded to discover the cause, but, upon penetrating the arches, they were so terrified by the horrible

phantoms which appeared, that they fled, one dropping his cap, the other his sword, which articles they dared not stay to recover.

The phantoms were, however, no other than certain conspirators, who, on quitting their meeting, stumbled over the property of the fugitives, and were not a little amused when the account of the goblins in the Colosseum was related to them by a sentinel, who had overheard the frightened spies. Thus it happened that the haunted ruins became far more secure than the streets of Rome, where, in truth, an honest man seldom cares to venture out after nightfall.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MEETING OF THE CONSPIRATORS.

The first voice heard in the midnight council was that of our acquaintance, Attilio, who, notwithstanding his youth, had already been appointed leader by the unanimous election of his colleagues, on account of his courage and high moral qualities, although unquestionably the charm and refinement of his manners, joined to his kind disposition, contributed not a little to his popularity among a people who never fail to recognise and appreciate such characteristics. As for his personal appearance, Attilio added the air and vigour of a lion to the masculine loveliness of the Greek Antinous.

He first threw a glance around the assembly, to assure himself that all present wore a black ribbon on the left arm, this

being the badge of their fraternity. It served them also as a sign of mourning for those degenerate Romans who wish indeed for the liberation of their country, but wait for its accomplishment by any hands rather than their own; and this, although they know full well that her salvation can only be obtained by the devotion, the contributions, and the blood of their fellow-citizens. Then Attilio spoke—

"Two months have elapsed, my brothers, since we were promised that the foreign soldiery, the sole prop of the Papal rule, should be withdrawn, yet they still continue to crowd our streets, and, under futile pretences, have even re-occupied the positions which they had previously evacuated, and to which we were promised that they should not return. To us, then, thus betrayed, it remains to accomplish our liberty. We have borne far too patiently for the last eighteen years a doubly execrated rule—that of the foreigner, and that of the priest. In these last days we have been ever ready to spring to arms, but we

have been withheld by the advice of an hermaphrodite party in the state, styling themselves 'the Moderates,' in whom we can have no longer any confidence, because they have used their power to accumulate wealth for themselves from the public treasury, which they are sucking dry; and they have invariably proved themselves ready to bargain with the stranger, and to trade in the national honour. Our friends outside are prepared, and blame us for being negligent and tardy. The army, excepting those members of it consecrated to base hopes, is with us. The arms which were expected have arrived, and are lodged in safety. We have also an abundance of ammunition. Further delay, under these circumstances, would be unpardonable. To arms, then! to arms! to arms!"

"Aye! to arms!" was the cry re-echoed by the three hundred conspirators assembled in the chamber. Where their ancestors held council how to subjugate other nations, these modern voices made the old walls ring again while they vowed their

resolve to emancipate enslaved Rome or perish in the attempt.

Three Hundred only! Yes, three hundred; but such was the muster-roll of the companions of Leonidas, and of the liberating family of Fabius. These, too, were equally willing to become liberators, or to accept martyrdom. For this they had high reason; because, of what value is the life of a slave, when compared with the sublime conceptions, the imperious conscience, of a soul guided always by noble ideas?

God be with all such souls, and those also which despise the power of tyrannising in turn over their fellow-beings! Of what value can be the life of a despot? His miserable remorse causes him to tremble at the movement of every leaf. No outward grandeur can atone for the mental sufferings he endures. May the God of love hereafter extend to tyrants the mercy they have denied to their fellow-man, and pardon them for the rivers of innocent blood they have caused to flow!

But Attilio continued, "Happy indeed

are we to whom Providence has reserved the redemption of Rome, the ancient mistress of the world, after so many centuries of oppression and priestly tyranny. I have never for a moment, my friends, ceased to confide in your patriotism, which you are proving by the admirable instructions bestowed upon the men committed to your charge in the different sections of the city. In the day of battle, which will soon arrive, you will respectively command your several companies, and to them we shall yet owe our freedom. The priests have changed the first of nations into one of the most abject and unhappy, and our beloved Italy has become the very lowest in the social scale. The lesson given by our Papal rulers has ever been one of servile humility, while they themselves expect emperors to stoop and kiss their feet. This is the method by which they exhibit to the world their own Christian humility; and though they have always preached to us self-denial and austerity of life, these hypocrites surround themselves with a profusion of luxury

and voluptuousness. Gymnastic exercises, under proper instruction, are doubtless beneficial to the physical development of the body; but is it for this reason that the Romans are called upon to bow to, and kiss the hand of every priest they meet? —to kneel also and go through a series of genuflections; so that it is really no thanks to them if one half of the people are not crook-necked or hunch-backed, from the absurd performances they have been made to execute for the gratification of these tonsured masters? The time for the great struggle approaches, and it is a sacred one! Not only do we aim at freeing our beloved Italy, but at freeing the entire world also from the incubus of the Papacy, which everywhere opposes education, protects ignorance, and is the nurse of vice!"

The address of Attilio had hitherto been pronounced in profound darkness, but was here suddenly interrupted by a flash of lightning, which illumined the vast interior of the Colosseum, as if it had

suddenly been lighted by a thousand lamps. This was succeeded by a darkness even more profound than the first, when a terrific peal of thunder rolled over their heads and shook to its foundations the ancient structure, silencing for a brief space Attilio's voice. The conspirators were not men to tremble, each being prepared to confront death in whatever form it might appear; but, as a scream was heard issuing at this moment from the vestibule, they involuntarily seized their daggers. Immediately after, a young girl, with dishevelled hair and clothes dripping with water, rushed into their midst. "Camilla!" exclaimed Silvio, a wild boar-hunter of the Campagna, who alone of those present recognised her. "Poor Camilla!" he cried; "to what a fate have the miscreants who rule over us reduced you!" At this instant one of the sentries on guard entered, reporting that they had been discovered by a young woman during the moment of the illumination, and that she had fled with such speed no one

had been able to capture her. They had not liked to fire upon a female, and all other means of staying her were useless. But, at the words of Silvio, the strange apparition had fixed her eyes upon him as the torches closed about them, and, after one long glance, had uttered a moan so piteous, and sunk down with such a sigh of woe, that all present were moved. We will relate, however, in the following chapter, the history of the unfortunate girl whose cries thus effectually checked our hero's eloquence.

CHAPTER V.

THE INFANTICIDE.

Born a peasant, the unhappy Camilla had, like her own Italy, the fatal gift of beauty. Silvio, who was by vocation, as we have already said, a wild boar hunter, used often, in his expeditions to the Pontine Marshes, to rest at the house of the good Marcello, the father of Camilla, whose cottage was situated a short distance from Rome. The young pair became enamoured of each other. Silvio demanded her in marriage, and, her father giving a willing consent, they were betrothed.

Perfectly happy and fair to look upon were this youthful pair, as they sat, hand in hand, under the shadows of the vines, watching the gorgeous sunsets of their native clime. This happiness, however, was not of long duration, for, during one of his

hunting expeditions, Silvio caught the malarial fever so common in the Pontine Marshes, and, as he continued to suffer for some months, the marriage was indefinitely postponed.

Meantime Camilla, who was too lovely and too innocent to dwell in safety near this most vicious of cities, had been marked as a victim by the emissaries of his Eminence the Cardinal Procopio. It was her custom to carry fruit for sale to the Piazza Navona. On one occasion she was addressed by an old fruit woman, previously instructed by Gianni, who plied her with every conceivable allurement and flattery, praised her fruit, and promised her the highest price for it at the palace of the Cardinal, if she would take it thither. The rest of the story may be too easily imagined. In Rome this is an oft-told tale. To hide from her father and her lover the consequences of her fall, and to suit the convenience of the prelate, Camilla was persuaded to take up her residence in the palace Corsini, where, soon after its birth, her miserable infant was

put to death by one of its father's murderous ruffians. This so preyed upon the unhappy mother, that she lost her reason, and was secretly immured in a mad-house. On the very night when she effected her escape, the meeting already mentioned was being held, and, after wandering from place to place, for many hours, without any fixed direction, she entered the Colosseum at the moment it was illumined by the lightning, as we have related. That flash disclosed the sentries at the archway, and she rushed towards them, obeying some instinct of safety, or at least perceiving that they were not clothed in the garb of a priest; but they, taking her for a spy, ran forward to make her prisoner. Thereupon, seemingly possessed of supernatural strength, she glided from their hands, and finally eluded their pursuit by running rapidly into the centre of the building, where she fell exhausted in the midst of the three hundred, at the foot of her injured and incensed lover.

"It is, indeed, time," said Attilio, when

Silvio had related the maniac's story, "to purge our city from this priestly ignominy;" and drawing forth his dagger, he brandished it above his head, as he exclaimed, "Accursed is the Roman who does not feel the degradation of his country, and who is not willing to bathe his sword in the blood of these monsters, who humiliate it, and turn its very soil into a sink."

"*Accursed! accursed be they!*" echoed back from the old walls, while the sound of dagger-blades tinkling together made an ominous music, dedicated to the corrupt and licentious rulers of Rome.

Then Attilio turned to Silvio, and said, "This child is more sinned against than sinning; she requires and deserves protection. You, who are so generous, will not refuse it to her."

And Silvio was, indeed, generous, for he still loved his wretched Camilla, who at sight of him had become docile as a lamb. He raised her, and, enveloping her in his mantle, led her out of the Colosseum towards her father's dwelling.

"Comrades," shouted Attilio, "meet me on the 15th at the Baths of Caracalla. Be ready to use your arms if need be."

"We will be ready! we will be ready!" responded heartily the Three Hundred; and in a few moments the ruins were left to their former solitude.

What a wild improbable story, we seem to hear some of our readers remark, as they sit beside their sea-coal fires in free England. But Popery has not been dominant in England since James II.'s time, and they have forgotten it. Let them remember that in the year 1848, when a Republican Government was established in France—which was the signal of a general revolutionary movement throughout Europe—and the present Pope was forced to escape in the disguise of a menial, while a National Government granted, for the first time in Rome, religious toleration, one of the first orders of the Roman republic was that the nuns should be liberated, and the convents searched. Giuseppe Garibaldi, in 1849, then recently arrived in Rome, visited in

person every convent, and was present during the whole of the investigations. In all, without an exception, he found instruments of cruelty; and in all, without an exception, were vaults, plainly dedicated to the reception of the bones of infants. Statistics prove that in no city is there so great a number of children born out of wedlock as in Rome; and it is in Rome also that the greatest number of infanticides take place.

This must ever be the case with a wealthy unmarried priesthood and a poor and ignorant population.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ARREST.

We took leave of Manlio at the moment when Gianni had delivered his master's message. The sculptor acceded to the Cardinal's request, and, after an interview with him, proceeded to execute the order for the statuettes. For some days nothing occurred to excite suspicion, and things seemed to be going on smoothly enough. From the room which Gianni had hired Cencio watched the artist incessantly, all the while carefully maturing his plot. At last, one evening, when our sculptor was hard at work, Cencio broke into the studio, exclaiming excitedly, "For the love of God, permit me to remain here a little while! I am pursued by the police, who wish to arrest me. I assure you I am guilty of no crime, except that of being a liberal,

and of having declared, in a moment of anger, that the overthrow of the Republic by the French was an assassination of liberty." So saying, Cencio made as though to conceal himself behind some statuary.

"These are hard times," soliloquised Manlio, "and little confidence can be placed in anybody; yet, how can I drive out one compromised by his political opinions only; thereby, perhaps, adding to the number of those unfortunates now lingering in the priests' prisons? He looks a decent fellow, and would have a better chance of effecting his escape if he remained here till nightfall. Yes! he shall stay." Manlio, therefore, rose, and beckoning to the supposed fugitive, bade him follow to the end of the studio, where he secreted him carefully behind some massive blocks of marble, little dreaming that he harboured a traitor.

The artist had scarcely resumed his occupation before a patrol stopped before the house and demanded permission to make a

domiciliary visit, as a suspected person had been seen to enter the house.

Poor Manlio endeavoured to put aside the suspicions of the officer, so far as he could do it without compromising his veracity; and, little divining the trap into which he had fallen, attempted to lead him in a direction opposite to that in which the crafty Cencio had taken refuge. The patrol, being in league with Cencio, felt, of course, quite certain of his presence on the premises, but some few minutes elapsed before he succeeded in discovering the carefully-chosen hiding-place; and the interval would have been longer had not Cencio stealthily put out his hand and pulled him, the sbirro, gently by the coat as he passed. The functionary paused suddenly, exclaiming, with an affected tone of triumph, "Ah, I have you!" then, turning upon Manlio, he seized the artist by the collar, saying, in the sternest of tones, "You must accompany me forthwith to the tribunal, and account for your crime in giving shelter to this miscreant, who is in open

rebellion against the Government of his Holiness."

Manlio, utterly beside himself, in the first burst of indignation, cast his eye around among the chisels, hammers, and other tools, for something suitable with which to cleave the skull of his accuser; but at this moment his wife, followed by the lovely Clelia, rushed into the apartment to ascertain the cause of so unwonted a disturbance. They trembled at the sight of their beloved one in the grasp of the hated police-officer, who cunningly relaxed his hold, and said, in a very different voice, as soon as he perceived them, "Be of courage, signor, and console these good ladies; your presence will be needed for a short time only. A few questions will be asked, to which undoubtedly you can give satisfactory replies."

In vain did the terrified women expostulate. Finding their tears and remonstrances of no avail, they reluctantly let go their hold of the unhappy Manlio, whom they had clasped in their terror. He, dis-

daining any appeal to the courtesy of such a scoundrel as he knew the patrol to be, waved them an adieu, and departed with a dignified air.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LEGACY.

The Roman Republic, established by the unanimous and legitimate votes of the people, elected General Garibaldi, on the 30th of June, 1849, legal guardian of the rights of the people, and conferred upon him the executive power of the State, which the Triumvirate resigned into his hands. This national government was overthrown by foreign bayonets, after a most heroic struggle for freedom. The first act of General Oudinot was to send a French colonel to lay the keys of the city at the feet of the Pope.

Thus was the power of the priests restored, and they returned to all their former tyranny and luxury.

These worthy teachers, when preaching to the Roman women about the glory of Heaven, impress upon them that they, and

they only, have power to give free entrance into eternal bliss. To liberate these misguided beings from superstition, and rescue them from the deceit of the so-called "reverend fathers" is the question of life or death to Italy; this, in fact, is the only way in which to work out the deliverance of our country. Many will tell you there are good priests. But a priest, to become really good, must discard the livery which he wears. For is it not the uniform of the promoters of brigandage over the half of Italy? Has it not marched as a pioneer-garb before every sinister foreigner that ever visited our country?

Again, the priests, by their continual impostures and crafty abuse of the ignorance and consequent superstition of the people, have acquired great riches. Those who endeavour to retard our progress make a distinction between the temporal power, which should be combated, and the spiritual power, which should be respected; as if Antonelli, Schiatone, and Crocco were spiritual ushers, by whom the souls of men

could hope to be conducted into the presence of the Eternal. But what are the sources of their wealth? Firstly, they exact a revenue for repentance, as the vicegerents of God upon earth, claiming power, as such, to pardon all sin. A rich but credulous man may thus commit any crime he chooses with impunity, knowing that he has the means of securing absolution, and believing implicitly that, by rendering up a portion of his treasure or profit to the clergy, he will have no difficulty in escaping the wrath to come.

Secondly, there is the tax upon the agonies of death. At the bedside of the sick, by threats of purgatory and eternal perdition, they frighten their unhappy victims into bequeathing to Mother Church enormous legacies, if, indeed, they do not succeed in getting absolute possession of the whole of their estates, to the detriment of the legal heirs, who are not unfrequently in this manner reduced to beggary. Look, for instance, at the island of Sicily: one half of that country now

belongs to the priesthood, or various orders of monks, by this process.

But, to our tale. One evening, about nine o'clock, in the month of December, a thing in black might have been seen traversing the Piazza of the Rotunda—that magnificent monument of antiquity—every column a perfect work, worth its weight in silver—which the priests have perverted from sublime memories to their cunning uses. It was a figure which would have made a man shudder involuntarily, though he were one of the thousand of Calatifimi. Enveloped in a black sottana—the covering of a heart still blacker, the heart, in fact, of a demon, it was one that contemplated the committal of a crime which only a priest would conceive or execute. A priest it was, and he made his stealthy path to the gateway of the house of Pompeo, where he paused a moment before knocking to gain admittance, casting glances around, to assure himself no one was in sight, as if he feared his guilty secret would betray itself, or as if pausing before he added even to eccle-

siastical wickednesses a sin so cruel as the one he was meditating. He knocked at last. The door opened, and the porter, recognising the "Reverend Father Ignazio," saluted him respectfully, and lighted him, as he entered, a few steps up the staircase of one of the richest residences of the city.

"Where is Sister Flavia?" demanded the priest of the first servant who came forward to meet him.

"At the bedside of my dying mistress," replied Siccio, in a constrained voice, for, being a true Roman, he had little sympathy for "the birds of ill-omen," as he profanely styled the reverend fathers.

Father Ignazio, knowing the house well, hurried on to the sick room, at the door of which he gently tapped, requesting admittance in a peculiar tone. An elderly, sour-looking nun opened the door quickly, and, with a significant expression on her evil countenance, as her eyes encountered those of the priest.

"Is all over?" whispered he, as he ad-

vanced towards the bed on which the expiring patient lay.

"Not yet," was the equally low reply.

Ignazio thereupon, without another word, took a small phial from under his sottana, and emptied the contents into a glass. With the assistance of the nun he raised his victim, and poured the deadly fluid down her throat, letting her head fall heavily back upon the pillows, whilst a complacent smile spread itself over his diabolical features as, after one gasp, the jaw fell. He then retired to a small table at the end of the apartment, where he seated himself, followed by Sister Flavia, who stealthily drew a paper from her dress and handed it to him.

Father Ignazio seized the paper with a trembling hand, and after perusing it with an anxious air, as if to convince himself that it was indeed the accomplishment of his desires, he thrust it into his breast, muttering, with an emphatic nod, "You shall be rewarded, my good Flavia."

That paper was the last will and testa-

ment of the Signora Virginia Pompeo, the mother of the brave Emilio Pompeo, who perished fighting on the walls of Rome, where he fell, mortally wounded by a French bullet. His inconsolable widow did not long survive him, and committed, with her last breath, her infant son to the care of his doting grandmother, La Signora Virginia Pompeo, who tenderly cherished the orphan Muzio, the only remaining scion of the noble house of Pompeo. But, unhappily for him, Father Ignazio was her confessor. When the signora's health began to fail, and her mind to be weakened, the wily Father spared no means to convince her that she ought to make her will, and, as a sacred duty, to leave a large sum to be spent in masses for the release of souls from purgatory. The signora lingering for some time, the covetous priest felt his desires grow, and resolved to destroy this first will, and to obtain another, purporting to leave the whole of her immense estates to the corporation of St. Francesco di Paola, and appoint himself as her sole executor.

This document he prepared, and entrusted to Sister Flavia, whom he had already recommended to the Signora Virginia as a suitable attendant. One morning she despatched a hurried message to the confessor, reporting that the favourable time for signing the fraudulent document had arrived. He came, attended by witnesses, whom he had had no difficulty in procuring, and, after persuading the sinking and agonised lady that she ought to add a codicil to her will (which he pretended then and there to draw up) leaving a still larger sum to the Church, he guided her feeble hand as she unconsciously signed away the whole of her property, leaving her helpless grandson to beggary. As if to jeopardise his scheme, the signora rallied towards the afternoon, whereupon, fearing she might ask to see the will, and so discover his treachery, Father Ignazio resolved to make such an undesirable occurrence impossible, by administering an effective potion, which he set off to procure, wisely deferring his return till nightfall.

The result has been already disclosed; and while the false priest wrought this murder, the unconscious orphan, Muzio, slept peacefully in his little bed, still adorned with hangings wrought by a loving mother's hands; to awake on the morrow ignorant of his injury, but robbed of his guardian and goods together—stripped of all, and forthwith dependent on chance—a friendless and beggared boy.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MENDICANT.

Eighteen years had rolled by since the horrible murder of La Signora Virginia related in the last chapter. On the same piazza which Father Ignazio had traversed that dark night stood a lazzarone, leaning moodily, yet not without a certain grace, against a column. It was February, and the beggar lad was apparently watching the setting sun. The lower part of his face was carefully concealed in his cloak, but from the little that could be discerned of it, it seemed decidedly handsome; one of those naturally noble countenances, in fact, that once seen, impresses its features indelibly on the beholder's memory. A well-formed Roman nose was set between two eyes of dazzling blue; eyes that could look tender or stern, according to the possessor's mood.

The shoulders, even under the cloak, showed grandly, and could belong only to a strength which it would be dangerous to insult or rashly attack. Poor as its garb was, such a figure would be eagerly desired by a sculptor who sought to portray a young Latin athlete.

A slight touch upon the shoulder caused the young mendicant to turn sharply; but his brow cleared as he welcomed, with a beaming smile, Attilio's familiar face, and heard him saying, in a lively tone, "Ah! art thou here, brother?" And although no tie of blood was between them, Attilio and Muzio might, indeed, have been mistaken for brothers, their nobility of feature and brave young Roman bearing being so much alike.

"Art thou armed?" inquired Attilio.

"Armed!" repeated Muzio, somewhat disdainfully. "Assuredly; is not my poniard my inheritance, my only patrimony? I love it as well as thou lov'st thy Clelia, or I mine own lady. But love, forsooth," continued he, more bitterly; "what right

to love has a beggar—an outcast from society? Who would believe that rags could cover a heart bursting with the pangs of a true passion?"

"Still," replied Attilio, confidently, "I think that pretty stranger does, in truth, think on thee."

Muzio remained silent, and his former gloomy expression returned; but Attilio, seeing a storm arising in his friend's soul, and wishing to avert it, took him by the hand, saying gently, "Come."

The young wanderer followed without proffering a word. Night was rapidly closing in, the foot passengers were gradually decreasing in number, and few footfalls, except those of the foreign patrols, broke the silence that was stealing over the city.

The priests are always early to leave the streets—besides, they love to enjoy the good things of this world at home after preaching about the glories of the next, and care little to trust their skins in Rome after dark, notwithstanding the protection afforded by the mercenary cut-throats just

named. May the day soon come when their services may be dispensed with altogether!

"We shall be quit of them, and that before long," answered Attilio hopefully to some such remark, as they descended the Quirinale, now called Monte Cavallo, the site of the famous horses in stone, *chefs d'œuvres* of Grecian art.

Pausing between these gigantic effigies, the young artist took from his pocket a flint and steel, and struck a light, the signal arranged between him and the Three Hundred, some of whom had agreed to help him in a bold attempt to release Manlio from his unlawful imprisonment.

The signal was answered immediately from the extreme end of the Piazza. The two young men advanced towards it, and were met by a soldier belonging to a detachment on guard at the palace, who conducted them through a half-concealed doorway near the principal entrance, up a narrow flight of stairs into a small room generally used by the commander of the

guard; here he left them, and another soldier stepped forward to receive them, and, having placed chairs for them at a table, on which burned an oil-lamp, flanked by two or three bottles and some glasses, this one seated himself.

"Let us drink a glass of Orvieto, my friends," said the soldier; "it will do us more good on a bitter night like this than the Holy Father's blessing," handing to each of them, as he spoke, a goblet filled to the brim.

"Success to our enterprise!" cried Muzio.

"Amen," responded Attilio, as he took a deep draught. "So Manlio has been brought hither," said he, addressing Dentato, the sergeant of dragoons, for such was the name of their military friend.

"Yes; he was locked up last night in one of our secret cells, as if he had been the most dangerous of criminals, poor innocent! I hear he is to be removed shortly," added Dentato, "to the Castle of St. Angelo."

"Do you know by whose order he was arrested?" inquired Attilio.

"By the order of his Eminence the Cardinal Procopio, it is said, who is anxious, doubtless, to remove all impediments likely to frustrate his designs upon the Pearl of Trastevere."

As Dentato uttered these words, a sudden tremor shook the frame of Attilio. "And at what hour shall we make the attempt to liberate him?" he sternly asked, as his hand clenched his dagger.

"Liberate him! Why, we are too few," the soldier replied.

"Not so," continued Attilio. "Silvio has given his word that he will be here shortly with ten of our own, and then we shall have no difficulty in dealing with these sbirri and monks."

After a pause, Dentato responded, "Well, then, as you are determined to attempt his release to-night, we had better wait a few hours, when gaolers and director will be asleep, or under the influence of their liquor. My lieutenant is, fortunately, de-

tained by a delicate affair at a distance, so we will try it if your friend turns up."

Before he could well finish his speech, however, Dentato was interrupted by the entrance of the guard left at the gate announcing the arrival of Silvio.

CHAPTER IX.

THE LIBERATOR.

Before continuing the story we must remark upon one of the most striking facts in Rome—viz., the conduct and bravery of the Roman soldiery.

Even the city troops have a robust and martial air, and retain an individual force of character to an astonishing degree. In the defence of Rome, all the Roman artillerymen (observe, all) were killed at their guns, and a reserve of the wounded, a thing unheard of before, bleeding though they were, continued to fight manfully until cut down by the sabres of their foes. On the 3rd of June the streets were choked with mutilated men, and amongst the many combats, after the city was taken, between the Roman soldiery and the foreigners, there did not occur one example where the

Romans had the worst of it in anything like fair fight.

Of one point, therefore, the priesthood is certain—that in every case of general insurrection the Roman army will go with the people. This is the reason they are compelled to hire foreign mercenaries, and why the revenues of the "Vicegerent of Heaven" are spent upon Zouaves, rifles, cartridges, and kilos of gunpowder.

Silvio was received by the triad with acclamations of joy. After saluting them, he turned to Attilio, saying, "Our men are at hand. I have left them hidden in the shadows cast by the marble horses. They but await our signal."

Then Attilio sprang up, saying, "Muzio and I will go at once to the gaoler, and secure the keys. You, Dentato, guide Silvio and his men to the door of the cell, and overpower the guard stationed before it."

"So be it," replied Dentato; "Scipio (the dragoon who had introduced Silvio) shall lead you to the gaoler's room; but beware

Signor Pancaldo, he is a devil of a fellow to handle."

"Leave me to manage him," replied Attilio, and he hastily left the apartment, preceded by Scipio and Muzio. Such an attempt as they were about to make would be a most difficult, if not an incredible thing, in any other country, where more respect is attached to Government and its officers. In Rome little obedience is due to a Government which, alas! is opposed to all that is pure and true.

Dentato, after summoning Silvio's men, led them to the guards stationed at the entrance to the cells. Silvio waited until the sentinel turned his back upon them, then, springing forward with the agility that made him so successful when pursuing the wild boar, he hurled the sentinel to the ground, covering his mouth with his hand to stifle any cry of alarm. The slight scuffle aroused the sleepy quarter-guard, but before they could even rub their eyes, Silvio's men had gagged and bound them. As they accomplished this, Attilio appeared

with Muzio, convoying the reluctant gaoler and his bunch of keys between them.

"Unlock!" commanded Attilio.

The gaoler obeyed with forced alacrity, whereupon they entered a large vaulted room, out of which opened, on every side, doors leading to separate cells. At sight of them, a soldier, the only inmate visible, approached with a perplexed air.

"Where is Signor Manlio?" demanded Attilio; and Pancaldo felt the grip of the young artist clutch his wrist like iron, and noticed his right hand playing terribly with the dagger-hilt.

"Manlio is here," said he.

"Then release him," cried Attilio.

The terrified gaoler attempted to unlock the door, but some minutes passed before his trembling hands allowed him to effect this. Attilio, pushing him aside as the bolts shot back, dashed open the door, and called to Manlio to come forth.

Picture the sculptor's astonishment and joy when he beheld Attilio, and realised that he had come to release him from his

cruel and unjust incarceration. Attilio, knowing they ought to lose no time in leaving the palace, after returning his friend's embrace, bade Muzio lock up the guard in the cell. As soon as this was accomplished, they led the gaoler between them through the passages, passing on their way the soldiers whom they had previously bound, who glared upon them with impotent rage, till they gained the outer door in silence and safety. Dividing into groups, they then set off at a quick pace, in different directions. Attilio, Muzio, and Manlio, however, retained possession a little while of the gaoler, whom they made to promenade with them, gagged and blindfolded, until they thought their companions were at a safe distance. They then left him, and proceeded in the direction of the Porta Salaria, which leads into the open country.

CHAPTER X.

THE ORPHAN.

When Silvio, with despair in his soul, was leading the unhappy Camilla out of the Colosseum towards her father's house, not a word passed between them. He regarded her with tender pity, having loved her ardently, and feeling that she was comparatively innocent, being, as she was, the victim of deception and violence.

Onward they went in silence and sadness. Silvio had abstained from visiting her home since it had been so suddenly deserted by Camilla, and as they neared it a presentiment of a new sorrow took possession of him. Turning out of the high road into a lane, their meditations were broken in upon by the barking of a dog. "Fido! Fido!" cried Camilla, with more joyousness than she had experienced for many, many

months; but, as if remembering suddenly her abasement, she checked her quickened step, and, casting down her eyes, stood motionless, overwhelmed with shame. Silvio had loved her before too dearly to hate her now even for her guilt. Or if he had ever felt bitterly against her, her sudden appearance that night, wild with remorse and misery, had brought back something of the old feeling, and he would have defended her now against a whole army. He had sustained her very tenderly through the walk from the Colosseum, and, although silent, had been full of generous thoughts; while she, timidly leaning on his strong arm, had now and then learned, by a timid glance, that he entertained pity for her and not contempt.

But when she stopped and trembled at the sound of the house-dog's bark, Silvio, fearing the return of a paroxysm of madness, touched her arm, saying, for the first time, "Come, Camilla, it is your little Fido welcoming you; he has recognised your footstep."

Scarcely had he uttered these words before the dog itself appeared. After pausing a moment in his rush, as if uncertain, he sprang towards Camilla, howling, and jumping, and making frantic efforts to lick her face and hands. Such a reception would have touched a heart of stone.

Camilla burst into tears as she stooped to caress the affectionate animal; but nature was exhausted, and she fell senseless on the damp ground. Silvio, after covering her with his mantle, to protect her from the cold morning air—for daylight was already dawning—went to seek her father.

The barking of the dog had aroused the household, and the young hunter perceived, as he approached, a boy standing on the threshold, looking cautiously around, as if distrusting so early a visitor.

"Marcellino," he shouted; whereat the boy, recognising the friendly familiar voice, ran to him, and threw his arms around his neck.

"Where is your godfather, my boy?" Silvio asked; but receiving no response save tears, he said again, "Where is Marcello?"

"He is dead," replied the sobbing child.

"Dead!" exclaimed Silvio, sinking upon a stone, overcome with surprise and emotion, while the tears rolled down his manly cheeks, and mingled with those of the child, who lay upon his bosom.

"O God!" he cried aloud; "canst thou permit the desires of a monster to cause such suffering to so many and to such precious human creatures? Did I not feel the hope that the day of my beloved country's release from priestly tyranny was at hand, I would plunge my dagger into my breast, and never again behold the light of day."

Recovering himself with a violent effort, he returned, accompanied by Marcellino, to Camilla, whom he found in a disturbed and restless sleep. "Poor girl! poor ruined orphan!" murmured Silvio, as he gazed

upon her pale and wasted beauty; "why should I arouse you? You will awake but too soon to a life of tears, misery, and repentance!"

CHAPTER XI.

THE FLIGHT.

We left Attilio, Silvio, and Manlio on their way to the suburbs. Attilio had determined that the house lately tenanted by poor Marcello, and still inhabited by Camilla, would be a safe hiding-place for the liberated sculptor, who could scarcely be prevailed upon not to return at once to his own home, so great was his desire to behold his cherished wife and daughter.

As they trudged on, each busy with his own thoughts, Attilio turned over in his mind the visit of Gianni to the studio, for the information Sergeant Dentato had given him relative to the arrest confirmed his suspicion that the Cardinal was plotting villany against his beloved Clelia. After some reflection, he concluded to impart his suspicion to Manlio, who, when he

had recovered from his first surprise and horror, declared his belief that Attilio's surmises were correct, and that it was necessary at once to hasten home in order to preserve his darling from infamy.

Attilio, however, aided by Muzio, at last prevailed upon him to conceal himself, promising to go and inform the ladies of the designs against them as soon as he had placed the father in safety.

Attilio, in truth, though so young, had the talent of influencing and guiding those with whom he came in contact, and the soundness of his judgment was frequently acknowledged, even by men advanced in years. Though reluctant to part with them, still Manlio felt that he could not do better than to entrust the care of his dear ones to this generous youth.

The day was beginning to dawn as they neared the cottage at the end of the lane, and, just as on the occasion of Camilla's return on the night of the meeting, Fido barked furiously at their approach. At Silvio's voice, the dog was quieted instantly,

and again Marcellino met him at the door. Silvio, after saluting the lad, asked where Camilla was. "I will show you," was the answer, and leading the way, he took them to an eminence near the cottage, from which they beheld, at a little distance, a cemetery. "She is there," said Marcellino, pointing with his finger; "she passes all her time, from morn till eve, at her father's grave, praying and weeping. You will find her there at all hours now." Silvio, without a word to his companions, who followed slowly, strode on towards the spot indicated, which was close by, and soon came in view of Camilla, clad in deep mourning, kneeling beside a mound of newly-turned earth. She was so absorbed, that the approach of the three friends was unperceived. Silvio, deeply moved, watched her, without daring to speak, and neither of the others broke the silence. Presently she rose, and clasping her hands in agony, cried bitterly, "Oh, my father, my father, I was the cause of your death!" "Camilla!" whispered Silvio, coming close up. She turned, and gazing

at them with a sweet but vacant smile, as if her lover's face brought her some solace in her heavy sorrow, passed on in the direction of her home, for the poor girl had not yet regained her reason.

Silvio touched her on the arm, as he overtook her, saying, "See, Camilla, I have brought you a visitor; and if any one should ask who this gentleman is, tell them he is an antiquary who is studying the ruins around Rome." This was the rôle which Attilio had persuaded Manlio to play, until some plan for the future had been formed. After a short consultation as to the precautions they were to observe, Attilio bade them farewell, and returned to the city alone, leaving behind him, with many a thought of pity and stern indignation, this father's humble household, devastated by the devices of the foul priest.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PETITION.

We must return to the sculptor's domicile, where two days had elapsed after the arrest of Manlio; nor had Attilio, who was gone in search of him, as yet appeared; so that the family were reduced to the greatest anxiety.

"What can they be doing with your good father?" repeated constantly the weeping mother to her daughter. "Although a Liberal, he has never mixed with any one whose principles would compromise him. He hates the priests, I know, and they deserve to be hated for their vices, but he has never talked about it to any one but me."

Clelia shed no tears, but her grief at her father's detention was almost deeper than that of her mother; and at last, saddened by

these plaints, she said, with energy, "Weep no more, mother; tears are of no avail; we must act. We must discover where my father is concealed, and, as Monna Aurelia has advised, we must endeavour to procure his release. Besides, Attilio is in search of him, and I know he will not desist until he has helped him and us, if he has not already done so."

A knock interrupted Clelia's consolatory words. She ran to the door, and opening it, admitted a neighbour, whose name has just been mentioned, Monna Aurelia, an old and tried friend.

"Good day," said she, as she entered the sitting-room with a cheerful countenance.

"Good day," answered Silvia, with a faint smile, wiping her eyes.

"I bring you something, neighbour; our friend Cassio, whom I consulted about your husband's affair, has drawn up this petition on stamped paper, supplicating the cardinal minister to set Manlio at liberty. He says you must sign it, and had better present it in person to his Eminence."

Silvia took the paper, and looked at it doubtfully. She felt a strong aversion to this proposition. Could she throw herself at the feet of a person whom she despised, to implore his mercy? Yet perhaps her husband's life was at stake; he might even now be suffering insults, privations, even torture. This thought struck a chill to the heart of the wife, and, rising, she said decidedly, "I will go with it."

Aurelia offered to accompany her, and in less than half an hour the three women were on the road to the palace.

At nine o'clock that same morning, as it happened, the Cardinal Procopio, Minister of State, had been informed by the questor of the Quirinale of Manlio's escape.

Great was the fury of the prelate at the unwelcome news, and he commanded the immediate arrest and confinement of the directors, officers on guard, dragoons, and of all, in fact, who had been in charge of the prison on the previous night.

Despatching the questor with this order, he summoned Gianni to his presence.

"Why, in the devil's name, was that accursed sculptor confined in the Quirinale, instead of being sent to the Castle of St. Angelo?" he inquired.

"Your Eminence," replied Gianni, conceitedly, "should have entrusted such important affairs to me, and not to a set of idiots and rascals who are open to corruption."

"Dost thou come here to annoy me by reflections, sirrah?" blustered the priest. "Search in that turnip head of thine for means to bring the girl to me, or the palace cellars shall hear thee squeak thy self-praise to the tune of the cord or the pincers."

Gianni knew that these fearful threats were not vain ones, and that, incredible as it may appear to outsiders, tortures too horrible to describe daily take place in the Rome of the present day. Meekly submitting to the storm, therefore, with downcast head, the mutilated wretch—for he was one of those maimed from their youth to sing falsettoes in the choir of St. Peter—pondered how to act.

"Lift up thine eyes, knave, if thou darest, and tell me whether or no, after causing me to spend such pains and money in this attempt, thou hast the hope to succeed?"

Tremblingly Gianni raised his eyes to his master's face as he articulated with difficulty the words, "I hope to succeed."

But just as he spoke, to his considerable relief, a bell rang, announcing the arrival of a visitor. A servant in the Cardinal's colours entered, and inquired if his Eminence would be pleased to see three women who wished to present a petition.

The Cardinal, waving his dismissal to the still agitated Gianni, gave a nod of assent, and assumed an unctuous expression, as the three women were ushered into his presence.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BEAUTIFUL STRANGER.

Rome is the museum of the fine arts, the great curiosity-shop of the world. There are collected the ruins of the ancient societies, temples, columns, statues, the remains of Italian and Grecian genius, the great works of Praxiteles, Phidias, Raphael, Michael Angelo, and a hundred masters. Fountains, from which arise marine colossi, chiefly, alas! in ruins, meet the eye on all sides. The stranger is struck with amazement and admiration at the sight of these gigantic works of art, upon many of which are engraved the mighty battles of a wonderful by-gone age. It is the fault of the priest that their beauty is marred by endless mitres and superstitious signs. But they are still marvellous and beautiful, and it was among them that Julia, the beautiful

daughter of England, was constantly to be found. She had resided for several years in this city of sublime memorials, and daily passed the greater part of her time in sketching all that to her cultivated taste appeared most worthy of imitation and study. Michael Angelo was her especially favoured *maestro*, and she might frequently be seen sitting for hours before his colossal statue of Moses, rapt in the labour of depicting that brow, upon which, to her vivid imagination, sat an air of majestic greatness that appeared almost supernatural. Born and bred in free and noble England, she had separated herself voluntarily from loving and beloved friends, that she might thus wander undisturbed among the objects of her idolatry. Unexpectedly, her pursuits had been interrupted by a stronger feeling than art. She had encountered Muzio many times in the studio of the sculptor Manlio; and, poor and apparently humble as he was, Julia had found under the ragged garb of a painter's model her ideal of the proud race of the Quirites.

Yes! though obscure, still Muzio was beloved by this strange English girl. He was poor, but what cared she for his poverty.

And Muzio, did he know and return this generous love?

Ah! in truth; but, although he would have given his life to save hers, he concealed all consciousness of her interest in him, and allowed not a single action to betray it, though he longed fervently for occasion to render her some trifling service; and, at length, the opportunity came. As Julia was returning from Manlio's studio, some few days previous to his arrest, accompanied by her faithful old nurse, two drunken soldiers rushed upon her from a by-way, and dragged her between them some little distance, before Muzio, who secretly kept her in view during such transits, could come to her succour. No sooner had he reached them, than he struck one ruffian to the earth, seeing which, his fellow ran away. The terrified Julia thanked him with natural emotion, and

besought him not to leave her until she reached her own door. Muzio gladly accepted the welcome honour of the escort, and felt supremely happy when, at their parting, Julia gave him the favour of her hand, and rewarded him with a priceless smile. From this evening, Muzio's dagger was consecrated to her safety, and he vowed that never again should she be insulted in the streets of Rome.

It befell that the same day upon which Silvia went to the palace Corsini to present her petition, Julia was paying one of her visits to the studio. Arriving there, she was informed by a lad in attendance of all that had occurred. Whilst pondering over the ominous tale, Attilio entered in quest of the ladies, and from him the English girl learned the particulars of Manlio's escape. His narration finished, Julia, in turn, recounted to him all that the youth had imparted to her concerning the presentation of the petition.

Attilio was much distressed, and could with difficulty be restrained from going

directly to the palace in search of Silvia and her daughter. This would have been very imprudent, and therefore Julia offered, as she had access at all times to the palace, to go to the Cardinal's house, and ascertain the cause of the now prolonged absence of the mother and daughter, promising to return and tell him the result.

Attilio, thoroughly worn out with excitement and fatigue, yielded to Spartaco's invitation to take some rest, whilst the boy related to him the particulars of what had passed since he left them to carry out the rescue of his friend.

CHAPTER XIV.

SICCIO.

Let us return to the year 1849, to the fatal scene in which the young Muzio was robbed of his patrimony.

There was an old retainer named Siccio, already introduced, who had served longer in the house of Pompeo than any other; he had, in fact, been born in it, and had received very many acts of kindness there. These benefits he repaid by faithful love to the orphan Muzio, whom he regarded almost as tenderly as if he had in reality been his own child. He was good, and rather simple, but not so much so as to be blind to the pernicious influence which Father Ignazio had acquired over his indulgent mistress, which he feared would be used to the injury of her grandchild.

But the guardian of souls, the spiritual physician, the confessor of the lady of the

house! what servant would dare openly to doubt him, or cross his path? Confession, too, that terrible arm of priestcraft, that diabolical device for seduction, that subtle means of piercing the most sacred domestic secrets, and keeping in chains the superstitious sex! How could Siccio dare openly to fight against such weapons?

The confessor was, however, aware of the good servant's mistrust, and therefore caused him to be discharged a few days after the Signora Virginia breathed her last, though not before he had overheard a certain dialogue between Father Ignazio and Sister Flavia.

"What is to be done with the child?" the nun had asked.

"He must pack off to the Foundling," replied he; "there he will be safe enough from the evil of this perverted century and its heretical doctrines. Besides, we shall have no difficulty in keeping an eye upon him," he continued, with a meaning look, which she returned, causing Siccio, who was unseen, to prick up his ears.

He straightway resolved not to leave the innocent and helpless child in the hands of these fiends, and contrived, a few nights after his dismissal, to obtain an entrance to the house by the excuse that he had left some of his property behind. Watching his opportunity, he stole into the nursery, where he found the neglected child huddled in a corner crying with cold and hunger. Siccio, taking him in his arms, soothed him until he fell asleep, when he glided cautiously out of the house into the street, and hired a conveyance to carry them to a lodging he had previously engaged at some distance from the city. To elude suspicion and pursuit he had cleverly concealed the little Muzio in a bundle of clothes, and, alighting from the vehicle before he arrived at his dwelling, quietly unwound and aroused the child, who trotted at his side, and was introduced by him to his landlady as his grandson.

During the lifetime of Muzio's father, who was an amateur antiquary, Siccio had gained a considerable knowledge of the

history of the ruins around Rome by attending him in his researches. This knowledge, as he could not take service as a domestic, on account of his unwillingness to part from the child, he determined to turn to account, and so become a regular cicerone. His pay for services in this capacity was so small, that he could with difficulty provide for himself and his little charge even the bare necessaries of existence. This mode of living he pursued however for some years, until the infirmities of old age creeping upon him, he found it harder than ever to procure food and shelter of the commonest kind. What could he now do? He looked at Muzio's graceful form, and an inspiration broke upon him. Yes, he would brave the danger, and take him to the city, for he felt that the artists and sculptors would rejoice to obtain such a model. The venture was made, and Siccio was elated and gratified beyond measure at the admiration Muzio, now in his fifteenth year, called forth from the patrons of Roman *ragazzi*.

For a while they were enabled to live in comparative comfort. Siccio now dared to reveal to him the secret of his birth, and the manner in which he had been despoiled, as the old man at any rate suspected, of his inheritance. Great was the indignation of the youth, and still greater his gratitude to the good Siccio, who had toiled so uncomplainingly for him, but from this time he steadily refused to sit as a model. Work he would, even menial work he did not despise, and he might have been seen frequently in the different studios moving massive blocks of marble, for his strength far exceeded that of other youths of his own age. He also now and then assumed the duties of a cicerone, when the aged Siccio was unable to leave the house from sickness. His youthful beauty often induced strangers to give him a gratuity; but as he was never seen to hold out his hand, the *lazzaroni* of Rome called him ironically "Signor."

In spite of his efforts Muzio was unable, as Siccio's feebleness increased, to provide for all their wants; and he became gloomy

and morose. One remarkable evening, when Siccio was sitting alone, shortly after Julia's adventure, a woman closely veiled entered his mean little room, and placing a heavy purse upon the table, she said—

"Here is something, my worthy friend, which may be useful to you. Scruple not to employ it, and seek not to discover the name of the donor, or should you by chance learn it let it be your own secret." And thus, without giving the astonished old man time to recover his speech, she went out, closing the door behind her.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CORSINI PALACE.

"This is truly an unexpected blessing—a fountain in the desert," thought the Cardinal, as the three women were ushered into the audience-chamber: "Providence serves me better than these knaves by whom I am surrounded." Casting an undisguised look of admiration at Clelia, who stood modestly behind her mother, he said aloud, "Let the petition be brought forward."

Monna Aurelia, considerately taking the document from Silvia, advanced with it, and presented it on her knees.

After perusing it with apparent attention, the Cardinal addressed Aurelia, saying, "So you are the wife of that Manlio who takes upon himself to shelter and protect the enemies of the state, of his Holiness the Pope?"

"It is I who am the wife of Signor

Manlio, your Eminence," said Silvia, advancing. "This lady," pointing to Aurelia, "kindly offered to appear before your Eminence, and assure you that neither my husband nor I have ever meddled with politics, and that we are persons of unquestioned honesty."

"Unquestioned honesty!" repeated the Cardinal, in simulated anger. "Why, then, as you are so very honest, do you first shelter heretics and enemies of the state, and then assist them to escape in such an unpardonable manner?"

"To escape!" exclaimed Clelia, who had hitherto preserved her presence of mind. "Then my father is no longer confined in this dreadful place"—and a flush of joy spread itself over her lovely features.

"Yes, he has escaped; but ere long he will be re-taken, and must answer for his double crime," said the Cardinal.

These words gave a blow to Silvia's newborn hopes, and, what with surprise, fear, and excitement, she fell back into her daughter's arms in a swoon.

The Cardinal, hardened to such scenes, at once determined to take advantage of it, so, summoning some servants, he ordered them to convey the fainting woman and her friends to another room, where proper remedies could be applied to restore the stricken wife. As they made their exit, he rubbed his soft hands gleefully, saying to himself, "Ah, my pretty one! you shall not leave the palace until you have paid me a fee." He then sent for Gianni, who, recognising the trio at their entry, had remained at hand, as he divined his services would be needed. When he presented himself, his master chuckled out—

"Ebben, Signor Gianni! Providence beats your boasted ability out and out."

Gianni, knowing that all was sunshine again when he was thus dignified by the title "Signor," answered, "Have I not always said your Eminence was born under a lucky star?"

"Well," continued the profane Cardinal, "since Providence favours me, it now only rests with you, Gianni, to finish the matter

off." Then he continued, "Follow the women, and see that every respect is paid them; and when they are calmed, direct Father Ignazio to send for the elder woman and the wife of the sculptor, under pretence of questioning them about his escape, that I may have an opportunity of conversing alone with the incomparable Clelia."

Bowing profoundly, the scoundrel departed to execute his dissolute master's commands.

As he passed out, a lackey entered, announcing that "La Signora Inglese" wished to see his Eminence on business.

"Introduce her," said Procorpio, stroking his chin complacently; for he congratulated himself, in spite of the interruption, on his good fortune, as he admired the young Englishwoman excessively.

Julia greeted him frankly as an acquaintance, holding out her hand in the English fashion, which he took, expressing in warm terms, as he led her to a seat, his delight at seeing her.

"And to what am I to attribute the

felicity of again receiving you so soon under my roof? This room," he continued, "so lately brightened by your presence, has a renewed grace for me now."

Julia seated herself, and replied, gravely, for she was slightly discomposed by the Cardinal's flattery, "Your Eminence is too condescending. As you well know, my former object in coming to the palace was to crave leave to copy some of the *chefs-d'œuvre* with which it is adorned; but to-day I am here on a different errand."

The Cardinal, drawing a chair to her side and seating himself, said, "And may I inquire its nature, beautiful lady?" placing, as he spoke, his hands upon hers with an insinuating pressure.

Julia, resenting the Cardinal's familiarity, drew her chair back; but, as he again approached, she stood up, and placed it between them, saying, as he attempted to rise, and with a look that made him flinch, "You surely forget yourself, Monseigneur; be seated, or I must leave you."

The prelate, profoundly abashed by the

dignity of the English girl, obeyed, and she continued, "My object is to obtain information of the wife and daughter of the sculptor Manlio, who, I am told, came to the palace some hours ago to present a petition to your Eminence."

"They came here, but have already left," stammered Procopio, as soon as he had recovered from his surprise.

"Is it long since they quitted your Eminence?" asked Julia.

"But a few minutes," was the reply.

"I presume they have left the palace, then?"

"Assuredly," affirmed he, unblushingly.

Julia, with a gesture of incredulity, bowed, and took her leave.

What is there perfect in the world? The English nation is by no means exempt from imperfection; yet the English are the only people who can be compared with the ancient Romans, for they resemble each other in the splendid selfishness of their virtues and their vices.

Egotists and conquerors, the history of

both abounds in crime committed either in their own dominions, or in those countries which they invaded and subdued. Many are the nations they have overthrown to satisfy their boundless thirst for gold and power.

Yet who dare deny that the Britons, with all their faults, have contributed immensely to the civilisation and social advancement of mankind? They have laid the grand foundations of a new ideal of humanity, erect, inflexible, majestic, free; obeying no masters but the laws which they themselves have made—no kings but those whom they themselves control.

By untiring patience and indomitable legality, this people has known how to reconcile government and order with the liberty of a self-ruling community.

England has become a sanctuary, an inviolable refuge, for the fugitive and unfortunate of all other nations. Those proscribed by tyrants, and the tyrants who have proscribed them, flee alike to her hospitable shores, and find shelter, on the single condition of taking their place as

citizens among citizens, and yielding obedience to the sovereign laws.

England, too, be it ever remembered, first proclaimed to the world the emancipation of the slave, and her people willingly submitted to an increased taxation in order to carry out this glorious act in all her colonies. Her descendants in America have, after a long and bloody struggle between freedom and oligarchy, banished slavery also for ever from the New World.

Lastly, to England Italy is largely indebted for her reconstruction, by reason of that resolute proclamation of fair play and non-intervention in the Straits of Messina in 1860.

To France Italy is also, indeed, indebted, since so many of her heroic soldiers fell in the Italian cause in the battles of Solferino and Magenta. She has also profited, like the rest of the world, by the writings of the great minds of France, and by her principles of justice and freedom. To France, moreover, we owe, in a great measure, the abolition of piracy in the Mediterranean.

France marched, in truth, for some centuries alone, and as the leader in civilisation.

The time was when she proclaimed and propagated liberty to the world; but she has now, alas! fallen, and is crouching before the image of a fictitious greatness, while her ruler endeavours to cajole the nation which he professed to emancipate, and employs his troops to deprive Italy of the freedom which he helped to give her.

Let us hope that, for the welfare of humanity, France will, ere long, resume her proper position, and, united with England, once again use her sublime power to put down violence and corruption, and raise the standard of universal liberty and progress.

CHAPTER XVI.

ENGLISH JULIA.

In Siccio's little room there was gathered that same evening a group of three persons who would have gladdened the heart and eyes of any judge of manly and womanly beauty.

Is it a mere caprice of chance to be born beautiful? The spirit is not always reflected in the form. I have known many a noble heart enshrined in an unpleasing body. Nevertheless, man is drawn naturally to the beautiful. A fine figure and noble features instinctively call forth not only admiration, but confidence; and every one rejoices in having a handsome father, a beautiful mother, fine children; or a leader resembling Achilles rather than Thersites. On the other hand, how much injustice and mortification are often borne on account of

deformity, and how many are the wounds inflicted by thoughtless persons on those wrongly afflicted by their undisguised contempt or more cruel pity.

Julia, for she it is who shone the loveliest of our triad, had just returned from her visit to the palace, and related to her auditors, Attilio and Muzio, what had transpired.

"Yes!" she exclaims, "he told me they were gone; but you see how powerful is gold to obtain the truth, even in that den of vice! The ladies are there detained. I bought the fact from one of his people."

Attilio, much disturbed, passed his hand over his brow as he paced and re-paced the floor.

Julia, seeing how perturbed in spirit he was by her discovery, went to him, and, placing her hand with a gentle pressure upon his shoulder, besought him to be calm, saying that he needed all possible self-control and presence of mind to procure his betrothed's release.

"You are right, Signora," said Muzio, who until now had remained silent, but watchful; "you are ever right."

The triad had already discussed a plan of rescue; and Muzio proposed to let Silvio know, and to engage him to meet them with some of his companions at ten o'clock.

Muzio was noble-minded, and though he loved the beautiful stranger with all the force of his passionate Southern nature, he felt no thought of jealousy as he thus prepared to leave her alone with his attractive friend.

Nor did Julia run any danger from her warm feeling of compassion for Attilio, for her love for Muzio, though as yet unspoken, was pure and inalienable—a love that no change of fortune, time, or even death, could destroy. She had but lately learned the story of his birth and misfortunes, and this, be sure, had not served to lessen it.

"No," she replied; "I will bid you both adieu for the present. At ten o'clock I shall

await you in a carriage near the Piazza, and I will receive the ladies, and carry them, when you have liberated them, to a place of safety."

So saying, she beckoned to her nurse to follow, and departed to make the necessary arrangements for the flight of the sculptor's family, whose cause she had magnanimously espoused, ignoring completely the personal danger she was incurring.

CHAPTER XVII.

RETRIBUTION.

JUSTICE! sacred word, how art thou abused by the powerful upon earth! Was not Christ, the just one, crucified in the name of justice? Was not Galileo put to the torture in the name of justice? And are not the laws of this unjust Babel, falsely called civilised Europe, made and administered in the name of justice? Aye, in Europe, where the man willing to work dies of hunger, and the idle and profligate flaunt in luxury and splendour! —in Europe, where a few families govern the nations, and keep them in a chronic state of warfare under the high sounding names of justice, loyalty, military glory, and the like! And in the name of justice there in the palace sit Procopio and Ignazio. Outside are the "rabble"—Attilio, forsooth, Muzio, and

Silvio, with a score of the Three Hundred, who mean to have justice after their own fashion. The hearts of these common people are glad and gay, as on the eve of a feast. It is true they beat, but it is in confident hope, for the hour of their duty is near. They pace the Lungara in parties of twos and threes, to avoid suspicion, awaiting the striking of the clock. Whilst they linger outside, we will enter, and take a retrospect.

When Gianni summoned Aurelia and Silvio to attend Father Ignazio, Clelia, suspecting treachery, drew a golden stiletto from her hair, and secreted it in her belt, that it might be at hand in the event of her needing it to defend herself.

The prelate, meantime, having attired himself in his richest robes, in the hope that their magnificence might have an effect upon the simple girl, prepared, as he facetiously termed it, "to summon the fortress." Opening the door of the apartment in which Clelia was anxiously awaiting her mother's return, he entered with a false benignancy upon his face.

"You must pardon us," he said, "for having detained you so long, my daughter, but I wished to assure you in person that no harm shall befall your father, as well as," he continued—and here he caught up her hand—"to tell you, most lovely of women, that since I beheld you first my heart has not ceased to burn with the warmest love for you."

Clelia, startled by the words, and the passionate look which the Cardinal fixed upon her, instinctively drew back a little, so as to leave more space, and place a small table between them.

A shameful burst of insult and odious entreaty followed this movement. In vain did Procopio plead, urging that her consent alone could procure her father's pardon. Clelia continued to preserve her look of horror, and her majestic scorn, contriving by her movements to keep the table between them. Enraged beyond measure, the Cardinal made a sign to his creatures, Ignazio and Gianni, who were near at hand, to enter.

Clelia, comprehending her danger, snatched forth her dagger, and exclaimed in an indignant voice, "Touch me at your peril! rather than submit to your infamous desires I will plunge this poniard into my heart!"

The libidinous prelate, not understanding such virtue, approached to wrest the weapon from the Roman girl, but received a gash upon his palm, as she snatched it free, and stood upon the defensive, with majestic anger and desperation. He called to his satellites, and they closed like a band of fiends about the maiden; nor was it till their blood was drawn by more than one thrust from her despair, that Gianni caught the wrist of Clelia, as she strove to plunge the knife into her own heart, while Father Ignazio passed swiftly behind her, and seized her left hand, motioning to Gianni to hold the right fast, and the Cardinal himself threw his arms around her. The heroic girl was thus finally deprived of her weapon. This achieved, they proceeded to drag her towards an alcove, which was concealed behind a curtain of tapestry.

At this instant, happily for our heroine, there was a sudden crash in the vestibule, and as her assailants turned their heads in the direction of the sound, two manly forms, terrible in their fiery wrath and grace, rushed forward. The first, Attilio, flew to his beloved, who, from revulsion of feeling, was becoming rapidly insensible, and tore her from the villains; while the prelate and his accomplices yielded their hold with a cry, and endeavoured to escape. This Muzio prevented by barring the way; and bidding Silvio, and some of his men, who arrived at this juncture, to surround them, he drew forth a cord, and, after gagging the three scoundrels, he commenced binding the arms of the affrighted prelate, his friends similarly treating Ignazio and the trembling tool Gianni. Many and abject were the gestures of these miserable men for mercy, but none was shown by their infuriated captors. The prayers and curses of the Cardinal were choked with his own mantle; and Muzio did not refrain, as Father Ignazio writhed under the pressure of the

cord, from reminding him of his villany in robbing a helpless child of his lawful inheritance.

At dawn three bodies, suspended from a window of the Corsini palace, were seen by the awakening people; and a paper was found upon the breast of the Cardinal, with these words: "So perish all those who have polluted the metropolis of the world with falsehood, corruption, and deceit; and turned it into a sewer and a stew."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE EXILE.

The sun of that avenging morning was beginning to shed its rays upon the few stragglers in the Forum who, with pale squalid faces betokening hunger and misery, shook their rags free of dust as they rose from their unrefreshed slumbers, when a carriage containing four women rolled through the suburbs. It passed rapidly along towards those vast uninhabited plains, where little is to be seen except, here and there, a wooden cross, reminding the traveller unpleasantly that on that spot a murder has been committed.

Arriving at the little house already twice mentioned, its occupants alighted; and who shall describe the joy of that meeting. Julia and Aurelia contemplated in silence the reunion of the now happy Manlio with

his wife and daughter, for all the prisoners of the wicked palace were free.

Camilla also watched their tears of gladness, but without any clear comprehension. Could she have known the fate of the Cardinal, it might perchance have restored her reason. After a thousand questions had been asked and answered, Manlio addressed Julia, saying—

"Exile, alas! is all that remains for us. This atrocious Government cannot endure; but until it is annihilated we must absent ourselves from our home and friends."

"Yes, yes! you must fly!" Julia said. "But it will not be long, I trust, ere you will be able to return to Rome, and find her cleansed from the slavery under which she now groans. My yacht is lying at Porto d'Anzo; we will make all haste to gain it, and I hope to see you embark safely in the course of a few hours."

A yacht! I hear some of my Italian readers cry. What part of a woman's belongings can this be? A yacht, then, is a small vessel in which the sea-loving and

wealthy British take their pleasure on the ocean, for they fear not the storm, the heat of the torrid zone, nor the cold of the frozen ocean. Albion's sons, aye, and her daughters too, leave their comfortable fire-sides, and find life, health, strength, and happiness in inhaling the briny air on board their own beautiful craft in pursuit of enjoyment and knowledge. France, Spain, and Italy have not this little word "yacht" in their dictionaries. Their rich men dare not seek their pleasure upon the waves—they give themselves to the foolish luxuries of great cities, and hence is it that names like Rodney and Nelson are not in their histories. Britannia has always loved and "ruled the waves" for centuries. Her wooden walls have been her inviolable defence. Long may her new iron-sides and ramparts prove the same, and protect her hospitable shores against foreign foes!

But a yacht is a strange thing for a woman to possess. True, but English Julia in childhood was of delicate con-

stitution; the physicians prescribed a sea voyage, and her opulent parents equipped a pleasure-vessel for her use. Thus Julia became so devoted to the blue waves that, even when the balmy air of Italy had restored her to robust health, she continued, when inclination disposed her, to make little voyages of romance, discovery, and freedom in the waters of the Mediterranean. Thus it was that she could offer so timely a refuge to the family of the sculptor.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BATHS OF CARACALLA.

Imagine the consternation in Rome on the 15th of February, the day following the tragic death of the Cardinal Procopio and his two abettors. Great, indeed, was the agitation of the city when the three bodies were seen dangling from the upper window of the palace. The rumour spread rapidly, and the immense crowd under the façade increased more and more, until a battalion of foreign soldiers, sent for by the terrified priests, appeared in the Lungara, and driving the people back, surrounded and entered the palace. To tell the truth, the soldiers laughed sometimes at the jests, coarse but witty, which were flung by the mob at the three corpses as they commenced hauling them up. Many were the bitter things that passed below.

"Let them down head over heels," shouted one; "your work will be finished the sooner."

"Play the devil-fish steadily, that they may not slip from the hook," hallooed another.

By-and-by the cord to which the corpulent body of the prelate was attached broke as the soldiers attempted to hoist it up, and hoarser than ever were the shouts of laughter with which it was greeted as it fell with a heavy shock upon the pavement.

Muzio, who was surveying the avenging spectacle, turned to Silvio, saying, with a shudder, "Let us away; this laughter is not to my taste now they have paid their debt."

In truth, Pasquin is almost the only real survivor of ancient Rome. Would that our people possessed the gravity and force of those times, when our forefathers elected the great dictators; or bought and sold, at a high price, the lands upon which Hannibal was at the time being encamped. But it must be long before their souls can be

freed from the plague of priestly corruption, and before they can once more be worthy of their ancient fame and name.

"We must have patience with them," observed Silvio. "Slavery reduces man to the level of the beast. These priests have themselves inculcated the rude mockery which we hear. At least, it could have no fitter objects than those dead carcases. Reproach not the people to-day—mud is good enough for dead dogs."

Thus discoursing, the friends made their way through the crowd, and separated, having first appointed to meet at the end of the week in the studio of Attilio.

On the day in question they found the young artist at home, and gave him a detailed account of what they had witnessed under the palace windows. It was the time for the re-assembling of the Three Hundred, but, before setting out to meet their associates at the Baths of Caracalla, they lay down to rest for a few hours; and while they slumber we will give some account of the place of assignation.

Masters of the world, and wealthy beyond compute from its manifold spoils, the ancient Romans gave themselves up, in the later days of the Republic, to fashion, luxuriousness, and excesses of all kinds. The toils of the field—whether of battle or of agriculture—although they had conduced to make them hardy and healthy before their triumphs, had now become distasteful and odious. Their limbs, rendered effeminate by a new and fatal voluptuousness, grew at last unequal even to the weight of their arms, and they chose out the stoutest from among their slaves to serve as soldiers. The foreign people by whom they were surrounded failed not to note the advantage which time and change were preparing for them over their dissolute masters. They rose with Goth and Ostrogoth to free themselves from the heavy yoke. They fell upon the queenly city on all sides, discrowned her of her imperial diadem, and bore away her uncounted riches.

Such was the fate of that gigantic empire, which fell, as all powers ought to

fall which have been based on violence and injustice.

One of the chief imported luxuries of the degenerate Romans was the thermæ, or baths, edifices upon which immense sums were lavished to make them beautiful and commodious in the extreme. Some were private, others public. The emperors vied with each other to render them celebrated and attractive. Caracalla, the unworthy son of Severus, and one of the very vilest of the line of Cæsars, built the vast pile still called by his evil name; the ruins of which forcibly illustrate the splendour of the past sovereignty, and the causes of its swift decay. The greater number of these conspicuous and magnificent buildings in the city of Rome have subterranean passages attached to them, provided by their original possessors as a means of escape in times of danger, or to conceal the results of rapine or violence. It was in the subterranean passages connected with the Baths of Caracalla that the Three Hundred had agreed to meet, and as the darkness of

night crept on, the outposts of the conspirators, like gliding shadows, planted themselves silently at the approaches to this wilderness of antique stones, from time to time challenging, in a whisper, other and more numerous shadows, which slowly converged to the spot.

CHAPTER XX.

THE TRAITOR.

The liberation of Manlio and the execution of the Cardinal gave an unexpected blow to the Pontifical Government, and aroused it from its previous easy lethargy. All the foreign and native soldiers available were put under arms, and the police were everywhere on the *qui vive*, arresting upon the slightest suspicion citizens of all classes, so that the prisons speedily became filled to overflowing.

A member of the Three Hundred—shameful to say—had been bought over to act as a spy upon the movements of his comrades. Happily, he was not one of those select members chosen to assist in the attack upon the Quirinale prison, or the release of Silvia and Clelia. Of the proposed meeting at the Baths of Caracalla he

was nevertheless cognisant, and had duly given information of it to the police.

Now, Italian conspirators make use of a counter police, at the head of which was Muzio.

His garb of lazzarone served him in good stead, and by favour of it he often managed to obtain information from those in the pay of the priests, who commonly employ the poor and wretched people that beg for bread in the streets and market-places of Rome in the capacity of spies.

But this time he was ill-informed. The last conspirator had entered the subterranean passage, and Attilio had put the question, "Are the sentinels at their posts?" when a low sound, like the hissing of a snake, resounded through the vault. This was Muzio's signal of alarm, and he himself appeared at the archway.

"There is no time to be lost," said he; "we are already hemmed in on one side by an armed force, and at the southern exit another is taking up its position."

This imminent danger, instead of making these brave youths tremble, served but to fill them with stern resolve and courage.

Attilio looked once on the strong band assembled around him, and then bade Silvio take two men and go to the entrance to reconnoitre.

Another sentinel approached at this moment from the south, and corroborated Muzio's statement.

The sentinels from the remaining points failing to appear, a fear that they had been arrested fell upon the young men, and their leader was somewhat troubled on this account, until Silvio returned, and reported that upon nearing the mouth of the passage he had seen them. At this moment they heard a few shots, and immediately after the sentinels in question entered, and informed the chief that they had witnessed a large number of troops gathering, and had fired upon one file, which had ventured to advance.

Attilio, seeing that delay would be ruinous, commanded Muzio to charge out

with a third of the company, he himself would follow up with his own third, and Silvio was to hurl the rearmost section upon the troops.

Attilio briefly said, "It is the moment of deeds, not words. No matter how large the number opposed to us, we must carve a road through them with our daggers." He then directed Muzio to lead on a detachment of twenty men, with a swift rush, upon the enemy, promising to follow quickly.

Muzio, quickly forming his twenty men, wrapped his cloak around his left arm, and grasping his weapon firmly in his right hand, gave the word to charge out.

In a few moments the cavernous vault startled those outside by vomiting a torrent of furious men; and as the youths rushed upon the satellites of despotism, the Pope's soldiers heading the division had not even time to level their guns before they were wrenched from their grasp, and many received their death-blow.

The others, thoroughly demoralised at

the cry of the second and third divisions bursting forth, took to headlong and shameful flight. The Campo Vaccino, and the lanes of Rome leading to the Campidoglio, were in a short time filled with the fugitives, still pursued by those whom they should have taken prisoners.

Helmets, swords, and guns, lay scattered in all directions, and more were wounded by the weapons of their own friends in their flight, than by the daggers of their pursuers; in effect, the rout was ludicrous and complete.

The brave champions of Roman liberty, satisfied with having so utterly discomfited the mercenaries of his Holiness, dispersed, and returned to their several homes.

Amongst the dead bodies discovered next morning near the baths was that of a mere youth, whose beard had scarcely begun to cover his face with down; he was lying on his back, and on his breast was the shameful word "traitor," pinned with a dagger. He had been recognised by the Three Hundred, and swiftly punished.

Poor Paolo, alas! had had the misfortune —for misfortune it proved—to fall in love with the daughter of a priest, who, enacting the part of a Delilah, betrayed him to her father as soon as she had learned he was connected with a secret conspiracy. To save his life, the wretched youth consented to become a paid spy in the service of the priesthood, and it was thus he drew his pay.

The worth of one intrepid spirit, as Attilio showed, is inestimable; a single man of lion heart can put to flight a whole army.

On the other hand, how contagious is fear. We have seen whole armies seized by a terrible panic in open day at a cry of "Escape who can," "Cavalry," "The enemy," or even at the sound of a few shots—armies, too, that had fought, and would again fight patiently and gallantly.

Fear is shameful and degrading, and we think the southern nations of Europe are more liable to it than the cooler and more serious peoples of the north; but never

may we see an Italian army succumb to that sudden ague-fit which kills the *man*, even though he seems to save his life thereby!

CHAPTER XXI.

THE TORTURE.

As the hour of solemn vengeance had not yet struck, fright, and fright alone, was for the black-robed rulers of Rome the result of the events we have detailed.

The priests were in mortal terror lest the thread by which the sword of popular wrath was suspended should be cut.

The hour, however, had not struck; the measure of the cup was not full; the God of justice delayed the day of His retribution.

Know you what the lust of priests is to torture? Do you know that by the priests Galileo was tortured?—Galileo, the greatest of Italians! Who but priests could have committed him to the torture? Who but a Popish prelate could have condemned to death by starvation in a walled-up prison Ugolino and his four sons?

Where but in Rome have priests hated virtue and learning while they fostered ignorance and patronised vice? Woe to the man who, gifted by God above his fellows, has dared to exhibit his talent in Papal Italy. Has he not been immediately consigned to moral and physical torturers, until he admitted darkness was light?

Is it not surprising that, in spite of the light of the nineteenth century, a people should be found willing to believe the blasphemous fables called the doctrines of the Church, and the priests permitted to hold or withhold salvation at their pleasure, and to exercise such power that rulers court their alliance as a means of enabling them the more effectually to keep in subjection their miserable subjects?

In England, America, and Switzerland, the torture has been abolished. There progress is not a mere word. In Rome the torture exists in all its power, though concealed. Light has yet to penetrate the secrets of those dens of infamy called

cloisters, seminaries, convents, where beings, male and female, are immured as long as life lasts, and are bound by terrible vows to resign for ever the ties of natural affection and sacred friendship.

Fearful are the punishments inflicted upon any hapless member suspected of being lax in his belief, or desirous of being released from his oaths. Redress for them is impossible in a country where despotism is absolute, and the liberty of the press chained.

Yes, in Rome, where sits the Vicar of God, the representative of Christ, the man of peace, the torture, we say, still exists as in the times of St. Dominic and Torquemada. The cord and the pincers are in constant requisition in these present days of political convulsion.

Poor Dentato, the sergeant of dragoons who facilitated the escape of Manlio, soon experienced this. He had been unfortunately identified as engaged at the Quirinale. Morning, noon, and night, means too horrible to divulge were resorted to for

the purpose of compelling him to give up the names of those concerned in the attack upon the prison. Failing to gain their point, he had been left by his tormentors a shapeless mass, imploring his persecutors to show their mercy by putting him to death.

Unhappy man! the executioners falsely declared he had denounced his accomplices, and continued daily to make fresh arrests.

Yet the world still tolerates those fiends in human form, and kings moreover impose them upon our unhappy countries. God grant the people of Italy may before long have the will and the courage to break this hateful yoke from off their necks! God set us free—before we are weary of praying—from those who take His holy name in vain, and chase Christ himself out of the Temple to set their money-changing stalls therein!

CHAPTER XXII.

THE BRIGANDS.

Let us for a time depart from these scenes of horror, and follow our fugitives on the road to Porto d'Anzo. Their hearts are sad, for they are leaving many dear to them behind in the city, and their road is one of danger, until they reach the sea; but, as they breathe the pure air of their beloved country, their spirits revive. That country, once so populated and fertile, is now all barren and deserted—indeed, it would be difficult to find another spot on earth that presents so many objects of past grandeur and present misery as the Roman Campagna. The ruins, scattered on all sides, give pleasure to the antiquary, and convince him of the prosperity and grandeur of its ancient inhabitants, while the sportsman finds beasts and birds enough

to satisfy him; but the lover of mankind mourns over it as a grave-yard of past glories, with the priests for sextons. The proprietors of these vast plains are few, and those few clerics, who are too much absorbed by the pleasures and vices of the city, to visit their properties, keeping, at the most, a few flocks of sheep or buffaloes.

Brigandage is inseparable from priestly government, which is easy to understand, when we remember that it is supported by the aid of cowardly and brutal mercenaries. These men, becoming robbers, murderers, and criminal offenders, flee to such places as this historical desert, where they find undisturbed refuge and shelter.

Statistics prove that in Rome murders are of more frequent occurrence in proportion to the population than in any other city. And how, indeed, can it be otherwise, when we consider the corrupt education instilled by the priests?

But other outlaws are styled brigands, besides these recruited from the runaway hirelings of the priests, who have committed

such dreadful ravages during the last few years. We have a sympathy for the wild spirits who are falsely said to live by plunder, but who retire to the plains, and pass a rambling life, without being guilty of theft or murder, in order to escape the humiliations to which the citizen is daily subjected.

The tenacity and courage shown by the latter in their encounters with the police and national guards are worthy of a better cause, and prove that such men, if led by a lawful ruler, and inspired with a love for their country, would form an army that would resist triumphantly any foreign invader.

All "brigands" are, indeed, not assassins.

Orazio, a valorous Roman, though a brigand, was respected and admired by all in Trastevere, particularly by the Roman women, who never fail to recognise and appreciate personal bravery.

This valiant man was reputed to be descended from the famous Horatius Cocles, who alone defended a bridge against the

army of Porsenna, and, like him, curiously enough, he had lost an eye. Orazio had served the Roman Republic with honour. While yet a beardless youth he was one of the first who, on the glorious 30th of April, charged and put to flight the foreign invaders. In Palestrina he received an honourable wound in the forehead, and at Velletri, after unhorsing a Neapolitan officer with his arquebuss, he deprived him of his arms, and carried him in triumph to Rome. Well would it have been for Julia and her friends had men of this type alone haunted the lonely plain! But when they were not far distant from the coast, a sudden shot, which brought the coachman down from his seat, informed our fugitives that they were about to be attacked by real brigands, and were already within range of their muskets. Manlio instantly seized the reins, and whipped the horses, but four of the band, armed to the teeth, rushed immediately at the horses' heads. "Do not stir, or you are a dead man," shouted one of the robbers, who appeared to be the leader.

Manlio, convinced that resistance was useless, wisely remained immovable. In no very gallant tone, the ladies were bidden to descend, but, at the sight of so much beauty, the robbers became softened at first, for a time, and fixed their admiring looks, with some promise of repentance, upon the exquisite features of the youthful Clelia and the fair Englishwoman. But their savage natures soon got the better of such a show of grace. The chief addressed the disconcerted party in a rough tone, saying, "Ladies, if you come with us quietly no harm shall happen to *you*, but if you resist, you will endanger your own lives; while, to show you that we are in earnest, I shall immediately shoot that man," pointing to Manlio, who remained stationary on the box. The effects produced upon the terrified women by this threat were various. Silvia and Aurelia burst into tears, and Clelia turned deadly pale. Julia, better accustomed to encounter dangers, preserved her countenance with that fearlessness so characteristic of her countrywomen. "Will

you not," said she, advancing close to the brigand, "take what we possess—we will willingly give you all we have?" putting, at the same time, a heavily-filled purse into his hand; "but spare our lives, and permit us to continue our journey."

The wretch, after carefully weighing the money, replied, "Not so, pretty lady," as he gazed with ardent eyes from her to Clelia; "it is by no means every day that we are favoured by fortune with such charming plunder. We are in luck with such lovely visitors. You must accompany us."

Julia remained silent, not realising the villain's presumption; but Clelia—in whom the chill of despair, which struck her when her father's life was menaced, was yielding to a deeper horror still at the scoundrel's words—with a spasm of anger and terror, snatching her poniard from her bosom, and sprang upon the unprepared bandit.

Julia, seeing the heroic resolution of her friend, also attacked him; but, alas! they had not the chief alone to struggle with. His comrades came to his assistance and

the English girl was speedily overpowered, whilst Clelia was left vainly to assail him; for, although she succeeded in inflicting several wounds, they were of so slight a nature that, with the aid of a follower, he had no difficulty in wresting her weapon from her and securing her hands.

When Julia was dragged off by two of the ruffians towards some bushes, Aurelia and Silvia followed, entreating them not to kill her.

Manlio, who had attempted to leap to the ground to aid his daughter, had been instantly beaten to the earth, and was being dragged off in the direction of the same thicket by the band, while the chief brought up the rear with Clelia in his arms.

All appeared lost. Death—and worse than death—threatened them.

But they had not gone many paces before the knave whose vile arms encircled Clelia was felled to the ground by a blow from a sudden hand; and Clelia gave a cry of joy as her deliverer raised her from the ground.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE LIBERATOR.

Clelia's liberator, who had arrived so opportunely on the scene of violence, was by no means a giant, being not more than an inch or two above the ordinary height; but the erectness of his person, the amplitude of his chest, and the squareness of his shoulders, showed him to be a man of extraordinary strength.

As soon as this opportune hero, who had come to the rescue of the weak, had stricken down the chief by a blow of the butt-end of his rifle upon the robber's skull, he levelled the barrel at the brigand who held Manlio in his grasp, and shot him dead. Then, without waiting long to see the effect of his bullet—for this hunter of the wild boar had a sure eye—he turned to the direction pointed out by Clelia. She was still much

agitated; but when she perceived her champion so far successful, she cried—

"Avanti! go after Julia, and rescue her. Oh, go!"

With the fleetness of the deer the young man sped away in pursuit of Julia's captors, and, to Clelia's instant relief, the English girl soon reappeared with their preserver, the brigands having taken to flight upon hearing the shots.

Reloading his gun, the stranger handed it to Manlio, and proceeded to appropriate to his own use those arms which he found upon the dead bodies of the brigands.

All then returned to the carriage, and found the horses grazing contentedly on the young grass that bordered the road. For a little while no one found a voice, absorbed as they were in thoughts of joy, agitation, and gratitude; the women regarding the figure of the stranger with fervent admiration. How beautiful is valour, particularly when shown in the defence of honour and loveliness in woman, whose appreciation of courage is a deep

instinct of her nature! Let a lover be bold and fearless, as well as spotless; a despiser of death, as well as graceful in life; and he will not fail to win both praise and love from beauty.

This sympathy of the fair sex with lofty qualities in the sex of action has been the chief promoter of human civilisation and social happiness.

For woman's love alone man has gradually put aside his masculine coarseness, and contempt for outward appearances, becoming docile, refined, and elegant, while his rougher virtue of courage was softened by her into chivalry.

So far from being his "inferior," woman was appointed the instructress of man, and was designed by the Creator to mould and educate his moral nature.

We have said our fair travellers gazed with admiration at the fine person of the brigand—for "brigand" we must unwillingly confess their deliverer actually was —and as they gazed, the younger members of the party, it must be acknowledged,

imported into their glance a little more gratitude than the absent lovers, Attilio and Muzio, would perhaps have wished. But admiration gave place to surprise, when the brigand, taking Silvia's hand, kissed it, with tears, saying—

"You do not remember me, Signora? Look at my left eye: had it not been for your maternal care, the accident to it would have cost me my life."

"Orazio! Orazio!" cried the matron, embracing him. "Yes, it is indeed the son of my old friend."

"Yes, I am Orazio, whom you received in a dying condition, and brought back to life; the poor orphan whom you nourished and fed when left in absolute need," he replied, as he returned her embrace tenderly.

After exchanging these words of recognition, and receiving others of ardent gratitude from the party, Orazio explained how he had been hunting in the neighbourhood, when he saw the attack, and came to do what he could for the ladies. He

advised Manlio to put them into the carriage again, and depart with all speed; "for," said he, "two of these bandits have escaped, and may possibly return with several of their band." Then, ascertaining the name of the port from which they intended sailing, he offered to become their charioteer, and mounting the box, drove off rapidly in the direction of Porto d'Anzo.

Arrived there without further adventure, the freshness of the sea air seemed to put new life and spirits into our jaded travellers, and the effect upon the beautiful Julia in particular was really marvellous. A daughter of the Queen of the Ocean, she, like almost all Albion's children, was enamoured of the sea, and pined for it when at a distance.

The sons of Britain scent the salt air wherever they live: they are islanders, with the ocean always near. They can understand the feeling of Xenophon's thousand Greeks, when they again beheld the ocean after their long and dangerous Anabasis,

and how they fell upon their knees, with joyful shouts of "Thalassa! Thalassa!" saluting the green and silver Amphitrite as their mother, friend, and tutelary divinity.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE YACHT.

The English girl broke out into pretty speeches of gladness when she caught sight of her little ship. "Dance, graceful naiad," ejaculated Julia, when she beheld it upon the blue waters of the Mediterranean, "and spread your wings to bear away my friends to a place of safety. Who says I may not love thee as a friend, when I owe to thee so many glorious and free days? I love thee when the waters are like a mirror and reflect thy beauty upon their glassy bosom, and thou rockest lazily to the sigh of the gentle evening breeze which scarcely swells thy sails. I love thee still more when thou plungest, like a steed of Neptune, through the billows' seething foam, driven by the storm, making thy way through the waves, and fearing no terror of the tempest. Now

stretch thy wings for thy mistress, and bear her friends safe from this treacherous shore!" Julia's companions were in the mood to echo this spirit of joy and exultation, and eagerly gazed at the little vessel.

Not daring, however, to excite suspicion by conducting the whole of her party at once into Porto d'Anzo, Julia decided upon leaving Silvia and her daughter under the protection of Orazio, who would rather have been cut in pieces than allow them to be injured or insulted. They were to wait in a wood a short distance from the port, while Julia, taking with her Manlio, who acted the part of coachman, and Aurelia, as her lady's maid, passed to the ship to make preparations to fetch the others. Capo d'Anzo forms the southern, and Civita Vecchia the northern limits of the dangerous and inhospitable Roman shore. The navigator steers his vessel warily when he puts out to sea in winter on this stormy coast, especially in a south-west wind, which has wrecked many a gallant ship there. The mouth of the Tiber is only navigable by

vessels that do not draw more than four or five feet of water, and this only during spring. On this left bank of the Tiber, in the marshes, dwelt of old the warlike Volsci, who gave the Romans no little trouble before those universal conquerors succeeded in subjugating them. The ruins of their ancient capital, Ardea, bear witness to its ancient prosperity.

The promontory, Capo d'Anzo, both forms and gives its name to the port, in which was stationed our heroine's yacht, awaiting her orders. The arrival of Julia, if not a delight and fête day for the priests—who hate the English, because they are both "heretics" and "liberals"—was certainly one for the crew of the *Seagull*, to whom she was always affable and kind. The sailor, exposed to dangers nearly all his life, is well worthy of woman's esteem, and nowhere will she find a truer devotion to her sex than among the rough but loyal and generous tars.

Going on board, the pretty English lady, after returning the affectionate and respectful greeting of her countrymen and servants,

descended to the cabin and consulted with her captain, an old sea-dog (Thompson by name), as to the best means of embarking the fugitives.

"Aye, aye, Miss," said he, glad to escape his enforced idleness, as soon as he saw how the land lay; "leave the poor creatures to me; I'll find a way of shipping them safe out of this hole!"

And in less than an hour the captain, true to his word, weighed anchor, and sailed triumphantly out to sea with our exiles on board, who, though shedding a few natural tears as the coast faded rapidly from their view, were inexpressibly thankful to feel that they were at last out of the clutches of their revengeful persecutors.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE TEMPEST.

But our readers will remember that it was now the third week in February—the worst month at sea, at least in the Mediterranean. The Italian sailors have a proverb, that "a short February is worse than a long December." Captain Thompson, in his anxiety to fulfil his young mistress's wishes, had not failed to heed the weather-glass, and he had felt anxious at the way in which the mercury was falling—a sure sign that a strong south-west wind was brewing nigh at hand, the most unfavourable for the safety of our passengers on this rocky coast. The *Seagull*, however, sailed gracefully out of port with all sails set, and impelled by a gentle breeze —gracefully, we say, that is, in the eyes of Captain Thompson and her owner; but not so gracefully in the eyes of Aurelia

and Manlio, who, never having entrusted themselves to the deep before, were considerably inconvenienced by the undulating motion.

Julia had arranged to cruise down the coast for Silvia and Clelia, still under Orazio's protection, bringing to off a small fishing place a few miles from Porto d'Anzo, where the yacht was to put in and embark them; but, though the captain would have gone through fire and water to obey his mistress's commands, the wind and waves were his superiors. The gentle breeze had given place to strong gusts, and black clouds were rapidly chasing one another athwart the sky. A storm was evidently rising, and every moment the danger of being driven ashore was becoming more and more possible. Night was closing in, and breakers were in sight. The only chance of escape was to cast anchor. Thompson, addressing Julia—whom he found wrapped in a shawl, lying on deck watching every movement—now acquainted her with his resolution, in which she

acquiesced. The sailors were about to obey their captain's orders, when Julia cried out "Hold!" for she had already felt the wind upon her cheek suddenly shift, and felt that to anchor was no longer wise. Now they must stand out to sea, and face the shifts of the tempest. The sails began to fill, and in a short time the *Seagull* moved off, and began to leave the surf behind her, obedient to the helm. The wind was fitful, and now and again terribly fierce; the sails, cordage, and masts creaked, and swayed to and fro. Captain Thompson ordered his crew, in the energetic yet self-possessed tone so characteristic of the British seaman, to "stand by" the halyards, with all ready to let go, but to take in nothing. Luffing a little more, they were soon free of the immediate peril; but, the wind increasing, they dared not carry so much sail, and three reefs were taken in upon the mainsail, the foresail and jib were shifted, and everything was made taut and snug against the fierce blasts which dashed

the billows over her sides, and occasionally almost submerged the tiny bark.

The *Seagull* presently put about on the port tack, always beating out from the land, and battled bravely with the storm, which waxed momentarily louder and stronger. One tremendous wave dashed over her, and then the captain, addressing Julia, who had remained on deck, besought her to go below, for he feared she might share the fate of one of the crew who had just been washed overboard by it. Poor fellow, no help could save him! Julia saw the sailor go over the side, and threw him a rope herself, but the man was swallowed up in the darkness and foam. The steersmen (for there were two) were now lashed to the helm, the captain to the weather shrouds of the mainmast, and the men held fast under the bulwarks.

When Julia descended to the cabin to appease the captain's anxiety, and look after her friends, the scene that met her view was so ludicrous that, in spite of her sorrow for the loss of the poor seaman, she

could not repress a smile. When the ship reeled under the shock of the wave which had carried the sailor away, Aurelia had been precipitated like a bundle of clothes into the same corner in which Manlio had taken refuge. The poor woman, frightened out of her wits, and thinking her last hour had come, clung to the unfortunate sculptor with all her might, as if fancying she could be saved by doing so. In vain Manlio implored her not to choke him: the more he entreated, the closer became her grasp. The sculptor, accustomed to move blocks of marble, was powerless to release himself from the agonised matron, but, aided by the motion of the ship, contrived to hold her off a little so as to escape suffocation. In this tragic and yet comic attitude Julia beheld them, and, after giving way for one moment to her irrepressible amusement, she called a servant to assist her, and succeeded in pacifying Aurelia, and in liberating Manlio from his uncomfortable position.

All night the *Seagull* struggled bravely

against the storm; and had it not been for her superior construction, and the skill of her commander and the gallant seamen in Julia's service, she must have perished.

Towards morning the tempest subsided, and the wind having changed to south-south-west, Captain Thompson informed Julia that it would be necessary to put in at Porto Ferrajo or Longone to repair the damages the yacht had sustained, which, indeed, were not slight. The two light boats had been carried away, also every article on deck, and the starboard bulwarks from amidships to stem. The foremast, too, was sprung, and Julia, seeing the impossibility of setting the vessel to rights at sea, consented to make the land. Here we will take leave of them for a time.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE TOWER.

It is time to return to Clelia, and see how it fares with her and her companions, Silvia and Orazio. As night approached, Orazio made a large fire, which he had been directed to do by Julia, in order that the smoke might be a guide to her vessel. He then looked out for a boat to hire, in which to convey the women to the yacht; but as the storm rose, he felt there would be no chance of embarking that night, and therefore cast about for a place of shelter until the morning.

He found a ruined tower: such towers abound on the coasts of the Mediterranean, and are the remains of places which were erected by the mediæval pirates, who used them chiefly to signal to their vessels when it would be safe to approach the shore.

Here, after making the ladies as comfortable as circumstances permitted, he left them, and paced up and down the beach, straining his eyes for a glimpse of the *Seagull*, which, he feared, could scarcely live in such a tempest. Half blinded by the spray, he continued his watch, dreading most of all to see the signs of a wreck. Some hours had elapsed when he perceived a dark object tossing about in the water, nearing and then receding, and finally stranded on the beach. Orazio ran towards it, and was horrified to discover that it was a human body, apparently lifeless, but still clinging to a rope and buoy. He snatched it up in his sturdy arms, and carried it into the tower, where he found Silvia and Clelia sitting by the fire which he had kindled for them. The lad whom Orazio had rescued was no other than the young English sailor washed overboard from the *Seagull*.

Silvia, aided by her daughter, stripped the inanimate lad, laid him before the fire, and chafed him with their hands for a very long while, until, to their great delight, he

slowly returned to consciousness. Then they wrapped him in some of their own dry garments, and hung his wet ones before the fire, Orazio supplying them with fresh fuel. Some of his native "grog" was needed for poor Jack, but none was to be had. Fortunately, Orazio had a flask of Orvieto, which he had given to the travellers to warm their chilled bodies during the bitter night, and Silvia wisely administered a liberal dose to the exhausted mariner, who, with a stone for a pillow, and his feet towards the friendly fire, fell by-and-by into a sound sleep, till yacht, tempest, shipwreck, and angelic nurses were all lost in oblivion. His slumber could not have been more profound had he lain upon a bed of down. The youthful Clelia, also wearied with the fatigue of the past day, soon followed his example, and with her head in her mother's lap, she slept the sleep of the innocent.

Orazio returned to his lonely post, and after pacing up and down the shore in the fear of seeing some other sign of disaster,

returned at dawn to the tower to dry his dripping clothes, and refresh himself after his dreary vigil.

Silvia alone could not sleep all that night, but only dozed occasionally, as she thought over the misfortunes that had befallen them. Her delicate and graceful frame had been much shaken by the terrible occurrences of the past few days. Affectionate mother! Though weary, she bore the weight of her precious Clelia, and though her position was a constrained one, remained immovable lest she should awake her. She was tormented with fear, too, on account of her beloved Manlio, who had escaped the fury of the priests only to be exposed to the merciless waves; and then, as if struck with remorse for thinking solely of him, she murmured, in bitter accents, "Ah, my poor Aurelia, to what a fate has your generous kindness brought you also!" And with these reflections she fell into another troubled doze.

The Roman outlaw slept not, even after daybreak. He felt he was too near the

cunning priests of Porto d'Anzo to be very safe. Seating himself upon a stone placed near the fire, which he fed from time to time with the wood he had previously gathered, he dried his garments one by one, with the exception of his cloak, which he had politely insisted upon wrapping around the ladies in the early part of the evening, as they were but indifferently protected from the cold. Orazio was gaily dressed in a dark velvet suit, ornamented with silver buttons; gaiters buckling at the knee covered a comparatively small and well-shaped foot, and a leg now displayed to advantage; while a black cravat was knotted round his handsome throat, and a red satin handkerchief, loosely tied, fell upon his wide shoulders. A hat, resembling in shape those worn by the Calabrians, nattily inclined a little to the right, crowned his head; a leathern powder-bag, embroidered with silk and silver, slung round his waist, in the band of which were placed two revolvers and a broad-bladed dagger, serving both as a weapon of defence

and hunting-knife. These gave him a well-prepared air; not to speak of his trusty carbine, which he had taken the precaution to reload, and which he always rested upon his left arm. As the flickering light of the fire fell upon him and lit up his bronzed features, an artist would have given much to have depicted what was truly a type of strength, courage, and manly beauty; while now and then, awakening from her uneasy slumber, Silvia regarded him with admiring eye, and forgot for a moment her anxieties, while guarded by that faithful sentinel. It is to be regretted that our hero, Orazio, was a "brigand;" but then he was a brigand of the better sort, and one only from the force of circumstances, his sin being that, like all brave and loyal men, he wished Italy to be united, and Rome freed for ever from priestly despotism.

Towards dawn Orazio approached Silvia, saying respectfully, "Signora, we must not remain here till broad day; as soon as there is sufficient light to show us the path to take we must depart. We are too near

our mutual enemies here to be out of danger."

"And Manlio, Julia, Aurelia, where are they?"

"Probably far out at sea," he replied; "and let us only hope it, for so they will be safe; but it would be well before we strike out into the woods once more to examine the beach. God grant we may not find any more bodies there."

"God grant they may not have been cast upon the coast during this fearful storm!" ejaculated Silvia, with clasped hands and raised eyes.

A mournful silence fell upon them, broken at last by Orazio, who had been looking out for the first streak of light in the leaden sky.

"Signora, it is time we were off."

Silvia shook her daughter gently, to arouse her, and Clelia got up, feeling greatly restored by her peaceful slumber; while Orazio, touching Jack with the butt-end of his carbine, awoke him. Then, for the first time, the sailor-boy was able to

tell how he was washed overboard, and his account gave hopes to the listeners that the *Seagull* was safe.

Our bandit, going first, led his party in the direction of the coast; but, although the rain had ceased, the wind had not subsided, and the women made their way with difficulty along the rough, uneven pathway, the spray from the sea beating in their faces. Orazio and Jack, who was now nearly recovered, searched for the tokens of a wreck, but, happily, none were found, and they returned to Silvia and Clelia, whom they had left in a sheltered place, with relieved countenances and cheerful voices, saying, "Our friends are out of danger." Orazio added, "And now, ladies, we will begin our own journey," turning at the same time to the right, and taking a narrow footpath through the wood well known to him. His charges, attended by Jack the English boy, followed in silence.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE WITHDRAWAL.

After the affair at the Baths of Caracalla, the position of Attilio and his companions became very much compromised. The traitor had, indeed, paid for his infamy with his life; but though the Government's mercenaries had had the worst of it, the police were now on the alert, and, if not quite certain, could make a shrewd guess as to who were the leaders of the conspiracy.

If, however, the friends of liberty outside had been as ready as the Romans, the conspirators might yet have had it all their own way on the 15th of February, or, indeed, at any other time. But the "Moderates," always indissolubly bound to the chariots of selfishness, would not hear the words "To arms!" They preferred waiting, at whatever cost, until

the manna of freedom fell from heaven into their mouths, or the foreigner should come to their relief, and set their country free.

What cared they for national dignity, or the contemptuous smile of all other European nations at the open buying and selling of provinces! They were thinking first of gain and remunerative employment, and were consequently deaf to all generous propositions likely to set in risk their Eldorado of profits; though they would, if successful, procure national unity and prosperity by energetic action.

This middle-class cowardice is the cause of Italy's degradation at the present day, and were it not for that, the kissing of the slipper would be an infamy of the past. It is the reason, too, why Italy's soil is so often vainly wet with the blood of her nobler, braver sons; and why those who escape the sword wander in forests to avoid the vengeance of the robed hyænas; and why the poor remain in abject misery.

Such was the condition of Rome at the beginning of the year 1867. Yet she might

have been happy, regenerated, and powerful, crowned with glorious liberty and independence, had not the foreigner have come to the aid of the falsely-called "father of his people." Now she grovels in bondage, loaded with French chains.

One evening, early in March, Attilio, Muzio, and Silvio met at Manlio's house to discuss their future movements. They had remained in Rome in the hope of achieving something, but the labyrinth was far too involved to allow our youthful and inexperienced heroes to extricate themselves, or the Three Hundred to extricate their countrymen.

"There is no use," spoke Attilio, bitterly, "in dedicating one's life to the good of one's country in these days, when the 'Moderates'* check all our efforts, and basely reconcile themselves with the enemies of Italy. How is it possible for Romans to do so? How can they ever live in harmony with those who have sold them and theirs so many times! who have precipitated us

* See Note 4.

from the first rank among the nations to the lowest! who have corrupted and polluted our city! who have tortured our fathers and violated our virgins!"

In his wrath Attilio's voice had risen until he literally shouted.

Silvio, more composed, said, "Speak lower, brother, thou knowest how we are pursued; perchance there may even now be some accursed spy near. Be patient, and for the present let us leave Regola in charge of our affairs, and quit the city. In the country we have true and courageous friends. Let us leave Rome until she is tired of being the laughing-stock of these leeches, who live by imposture and tyranny. Let us go. Our generous countrymen will call us brigands, adventurers, as they did "the Thousand" during the glorious expedition of Marsala, which by-and-by astonished the world. What matters it to us? Now, as then, we shall work and watch for the liberty of this our unhappy country. When she is willing to emancipate herself, we will fly to her rescue."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE FOREST.

After walking for about two hours through the forest, where to Silvia's and Clelia's inexperienced eyes there appeared to be no path ever trodden by man, Orazio stopped at a clearing, and they beheld a small pleasant-looking glade. Jack the sailor had proved of great use in removing fallen branches strewn across the way, which would else have greatly impeded the progress of the ladies. The weather had cleared up, and although the wind still moved the crowns of the trees, it fanned but gently the cheeks of the fugitives.

"Signora, sit down here with your daughter," said their guide, pointing to a large flat stone, "and take some rest, of which I see you are in need. Jack and I will go in search of some food; but, before

we do so, I will spread my cloak upon your hard bench, that you may repose in greater comfort."

Orazio was repaid with a graceful bow, and starting into the wood at a rapid pace, accompanied by the sailor boy, was soon hidden from their view.

Silvia was really tired, but Clelia, being of a more elastic constitution, and refreshed by her sound sleep during the past night, was not so much fatigued; nevertheless, she found it very welcome to rest in that agreeable place, where no human being save themselves was visible.

Yielding presently, however, to the vivacity of her age, the young girl sprang up, and began to gather some pretty wild flowers she had observed, and forming them into a bouquet, presented them with a smile to her mother, and reseated herself at her side. Just then, the report of a musket re-echoed through the wood. Silvia was greatly startled by the sudden echo in that lonely silent retreat, which had in it something solemn.

Clelia perceiving the effect upon her mother, embraced her, and in reassuring tones, said, "That is only a shot from our friend, *mia madre*, he will soon return with some game."

Silvia's colour came back again, and very soon afterwards Orazio and Jack rejoined the ladies, carrying between them a young boar, struck down by a ball from the carbine of the Roman.

At Orazio's request, Clelia, who had some knowledge of the English language, bade Jack gather some sticks, and light a fire, which he did willingly, and in a little time the cheerful pile was blazing before them.

Animal food may be necessary to man, in part a carnivorous animal, still the trade of a butcher is a horrid one, while the continual dabbling in the blood of dumb creatures, and cutting up their slaughtered carcases, has something very repulsive in it. For our own part we would gladly give up eating animal food, and as years pass on, we become more and more averse to the destruction of these innocent creatures, and

cannot even endure to see a bird wounded, though formerly we delighted in the chase. However, habit had made slaying and preparing the boar natural and easy to Orazio, who, compelled to live in the forest, had, indeed, no choice in the matter, being obliged either to kill game, or starve. He laid the boar upon the grass, and, with his hunting knife, skinned a portion, and carving some substantial slices, fastened them on a skewer, cut by Jack out of a piece of green wood, and laid them over the fire. When fairly cooked, he presented them to the famished travellers. It was a roast well fitted to appease the cravings of a moderate appetite, and the wild dinner was heartily relished by all the party. The meal was, indeed, a cheerful one, much merriment being caused by the absurdities uttered by Jack, whom Clelia was laughingly endeavouring to teach Italian.

The sailor is always a light-hearted fellow on land, and more particularly after he has been a long time at sea. Jack, forgetting his narrow escape, was

now the gayest of the four, and, in the company of the gentle and beautiful Clelia, did not envy his late shipmates, who were still tossing on the tempestuous ocean. For Orazio, his preserver, and the Italian ladies, his gratitude knew no bounds, although he had but a vague idea of their position and purposes.

When the repast was ended the party continued their journey, resting occasionally by the way; and in this manner arrived, late in the afternoon, in sight of one of those ancient edifices along the Ostian shore which appear to have escaped the destroying touch of time. It stood away from the sea, on the edge of the forest, and at the entrance to a vast plain; several fine oaks, many centuries old, were growing about it, planted apparently by mediæval possessors, with some attempt at regularity.

Orazio, begging the ladies to recline upon a mossy bank, stepped aside, and drawing a small horn from his pouch, blew a blast, shrill and long.

The signal was answered by a similar sound from the ancient building, and an individual, dressed much in Orazio's style, issued from it, who, approaching the brigand with an air of respect, cordially saluted him.

Orazio took the new-comer's hand in a friendly manner, and, pointing to his party, held a short conversation with him in an undertone. The man then retired, and Orazio, returning to the ladies, begged them to rise, and permit him to conduct them to this secure place of refuge.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE CASTLE.

The period of highest glory for the ancient capital of the world vanished with the Republic and with the majestic simplicity of the republican system; for after the battle of Zama, in which Hannibal was defeated by Scipio, the Romans had no longer any powerful enemies. It therefore became easy to conquer other nations, and, enriched by the spoils of the conquered, the Romans gave themselves up to internal contentions, and to every kind of luxury. In this way they were dragged down to the last stage of degradation, and became the slaves of those whom they had enslaved. And right well it befitted them that God should pay them in the same coin which they counted out. The last generation of the Republic, however, had truly a sunset

grandeur about it, and splendid names. Before passing away it presented to history some men at whom one cannot but marvel. Sartorius, Marius, Sylla, Pompey, and Cæsar, were men of such stature that one alone would suffice to illustrate the valour of a warlike nation. If perfection in a military ruler were possible, Cæsar, with his superb qualities as a general, needed only to possess the abnegation of Sylla to have been a perfect type of the class. Less sanguinary than the Proscriber, he possessed more ambition, and desired to decorate his forehead with a crown, for which he fell a victim, stabbed to the heart by the daggers of the Roman republicans. Sylla was also a great general, and a reformer; he struggled hard to wean the Romans from their vices, and even resorted to terrible means, slaying with this view at one time 8,000 persons. Subsequently, wearied with the ineffectual struggle against the tide of the time, he assembled the people in the Forum, and, after reproaching them for their incorrigible vices,

declared, that as his power as Dictator had failed to regenerate them, he would no longer retain that dignity, but before he laid it aside he challenged the city to require from him an account of his actions. Silence ensued, no man demanding redress, though there were many present whose relatives and friends he had sacrificed. With an austere mien he then descended from the tribunal, and mingled with the crowd as a simple citizen.

The Empire rose on the ruins of that wonderful Republic. And here it may be remarked that no republic can exist unless its citizens are virtuous. This form of government demands moral education and elevation. It was the vice and degradation to which the Romans had sunk that inaugurated the Empire.

Among the emperors there were some less deplorable than others — such as Trajan, Antoninus, and Marcus Aurelius. The greater part, however, were monsters, who, not satisfied with the enormous wealth they possessed, and with their

lofty position, set themselves to plunder the substance of others. They sought every pretext for robbing the wealthy citizens. Many of those, therefore, possessing wealth, retired from Rome—many sought refuge in foreign lands, others in far distant parts of the country, where they were safe from molestation. Among the latter, a descendant of Lucullus, in the reign of Nero, built the original walls of the antique castle where we left Clelia and her companions. Peradventure, some of the enormous oaks by which it was surrounded had sprung in but few removes from the acorns of the trees which shaded the courtier of Nero. However this may be, the architecture of the castle is certainly wonderful, and wonderfully preserved. The outbuildings are covered with ivy, which age has rendered of extraordinary growth. The interior had been completely modernised by mediæval owners, and although not adorned with all the luxuries of the nineteenth century, it contains several dry-roofed and spacious apartments.

Uninhabited for some time, the castle had been almost buried out of sight by the surrounding trees, which circumstance made it all the more suitable for Orazio and his proscribed comrades. Built in dark and troublous times, this stronghold, like all those of the same kind, possesses immense dungeons and subterranean passages spreading over a large space in the bowels of the earth. Superstition also guarded the lonely tower. Travellers making inquiries about the neighbourhood from the shepherds who tend their flocks in the forest openings, had heard, and duly related, that somewhere in this district was an ancient castle haunted by phantoms; that no one ever dared to enter it, and that those unhappy beings who summoned up courage to approach its gateway were never seen again. Moreover, was there not a story told that the beautiful daughter of the wealthy Prince T——, when staying with her family at Porto d'Anzo for the benefit of sea-bathing, had one day wandered with her maids into the woods, where the

affrighted and helpless women saw their mistress carried up into the air by spirits, and although every nook of the forest was searched by the command of her distressed father, no traces of the young princess were ever afterwards discovered?

To this haunt of marvels Orazio then conducted our travellers, as we have before described.

CHAPTER XXX.

IRENE.

Upon the threshold of the castle, as our travellers drew near, stood a young woman, whose appearance betokened the Roman matron, but of greater delicacy perhaps than the ancient type possessed. She numbered some twenty years; and, though a charming smile spread itself over her lovely features, and her eyes and soft abundant hair were extremely beautiful, still it was the majestic natural bearing of Irene which most struck the beholder.

As if unconscious of the presence of strangers, she ran to Orazio, and folded him in a warm embrace, whilst the blush which glad love can excite suffused both their faces, as they regarded each other with undisguised affection. Then, turning to the two ladies, she bowed grace-

fully, and welcomed them with a cordial salute, as Orazio said—

"Irene, I present to you the wife and daughter of Manlio, our renowned sculptor of Rome."

Honest Jack was perfectly astounded at seeing so much beauty and grandeur where he expected to find nothing except solitude and savage desert. But his astonishment was greater still when he was invited, along with the rest, into the castle, and beheld a table covered with a profusion of modest comforts in a handsome and spacious dining-hall.

"You expected me, then, Carissima?" observed Orazio, as he entered it, to Irene.

"Oh, yes; my heart told me you would not pass another night away," was the reply; and the wedded lovers exchanged a look, which made the thoughts of Clelia, as she beheld it, fly to Attilio, and we do not overstep the bounds of truth if we say that Silvia also remembered her absent Manlio with a sigh.

Jack, with the appetite of a young

boy after his very long walk, felt nothing of the pangs of love, but much of those of hunger. And now another scene amazed mother and daughter as well as the sailor—who stood, indeed, with wide open mouth staring at what seemed enchantment—for, as Orazio blew his horn again, fifteen new guests, one after another, each fully armed and equipped like their leader, filed into the room. The hour being late, there was little daylight in the apartment, which gave to their entrance a more melodramatic air; but when the room was lit up with a lamp, the open and manly countenances of the new-comers were seen, and inspired our party with admiration and confidence. The strangers made obeisance to the ladies and their hostess. Orazio, placing Silvia on his right hand, and Clelia on his left, Irene being seated by her side, called out, "To table." When their chief (to whom they showed great respect) was seated, the men took their places, silently; and Jack found a vacant seat by the side of Silvia, which

he took with calm resignation at his good luck. The repast began with a toast "to the liberty of Rome," which each drank in a glass of vermuth, and then eating commenced, the meal lasting some time. When all had appeased their hunger, Irene rose, with a sweet grace, from the table, and conducted her fair visitors to an upper chamber of the tower; and while a servant prepared, according to her orders, some beds for her guests, she exchanged with them, after the universal manner of ladies, a few words about their mutual histories.

Silvia's and Clelia's you already know, so it only remains for us, who have the privilege of their confidence, to narrate what Irene imparted to them.

"You will wonder to hear," said she, "that I am the daughter of Prince T——, whom perhaps you know in Rome, as he is famous for his wealth. My father gave me a liberal education, for I did not care about feminine accomplishments, such as music and dancing, but was attracted by

deeper studies. I delighted in histories; and when I commenced that of our Rome, I was thoroughly fascinated by the story of the republic, so full of deeds of heroism and virtue; and my young imagination became exalted and affected to such an extent that I felt ashamed of my name and time. Comparing those heroic days with the shameful and selfish empire, and more especially with the present state of Rome under the humiliating and miserable rule of the priest, I became inexpressibly sorry for the loss of that ancient ideal, and conceived an intense hatred and disgust for those who are the true instruments of the abasement and servility of our people. With such a disposition, and such sentiments, you can imagine how distasteful the princely amusements and occupations of my father's house became to me. The effeminate homage of the Roman aristocracy—creatures of the priest—and the presence of the foreigner palled upon me. Balls, feasts, and other dissipations, gave me no gratification; only in the pathetic

ruins scattered over our metropolis did I find delight. On horseback or on foot, I passed hours daily examining those relics of Rome's ancient grandeur.

"When I attained my fifteenth year I was certainly better acquainted with the edifices of the old architects and our numerous ruins than with the needle, embroidery, and the fashions. I used to make very distant excursions on horseback, accompanied by an old and trusty servant of the family.

"One evening, when I was returning from an exploration, and crossing Trastevere, some drunken foreign soldiers, who had picked a quarrel at an inn, rushed out, pursuing one another with drawn swords. My horse took fright, and galloped along the road, overleaping or overturning everything in his way, in spite of all my endeavours to check his speed. I am a good rider, and kept a firm seat, to the admiration of the beholders; but my steed continuing his headlong race, my strength began to fail, and I was about to let

myself fall—in which case I should certainly have been dashed to pieces on the pavement or severely hurt—when a brave youth sprang from the roadside, and, flinging himself before my horse, seized the bridle with his left hand, and, as the animal reared and stumbled, clasped me with the right.

"The powerful and sudden grasp of my robust preserver caused the poor beast indeed to swerve sharply round, and, striking one foot against the curb, he stumbled and fell, splitting his skull open against the wall of a house. I was saved, but had fainted; and when I returned to consciousness I found myself at home, in my own bed, and surrounded by my servants. And who was my preserver? Of whom could I make inquiries? I sent for my old groom, but he could tell me little, except that he had followed me as quickly as he well could, and had arrived at the scene of the catastrophe just as I was being carried into a house. All he knew was that my deliverer seemed a young man,

and that he had retired immediately after placing me in the care of the woman of the house, who was very attentive when she learned who I was.

"Still my ardent imagination, even in that dangerous moment, had traced more faithfully than they the noble lineaments of the youth. His eyes had but flashed an instantaneous look into mine, but it was indelibly imprinted on my heart. I could never forget that face, which realised at last, as in my memory, the heroes of the past. I shall know him again, I said to myself. He is certainly a Roman, and if a Roman, he belongs to the race of the Quirites! My ideal people; the objects of my worship! You know the custom of visiting the Colosseum by moonlight, which then displays its majestic beauty to perfection. Well, I went one night to view it, guarded by the same old servant; and as I was coming back, and had arrived at the turning of the road which leads from the Tarpeian to Campidoglio, my servant was struck down by a blow from a cudgel, while

two men, who had concealed themselves in the shadow cast by an immense building, sprang out upon me, and, seizing me by the arms, dragged me in the direction of the Arch of Severus. I was terror-stricken and in despair, when, as Heaven willed it, I heard a cry of anger, and we were quickly overtaken by a man, whom I recognised in the dim light as my late preserver. He threw himself upon my assailants, and a fearful struggle began between the three. My young athlete, however, managed to lay the assassins in the dust, and returned to my side; but, perceiving that my servant had risen, and was approaching unhurt, he took my hand, and kissing it respectfully, departed before I could recover from the sudden shock of the unexpected attack, or could articulate a single word.

"I have no recollection of my mother; but my father, who loved me tenderly, used to take me every year to bathe at Porto d'Anzo, for he knew how much I delighted in the ocean, and how pleased I was to escape from the aristocratic society of

Rome, where, had he studied his own inclinations, he would gladly have remained. My father possessed a little villa not far from the sea, to the north of Porto d'Anzo, where we resided during our visits to the Mediterranean, the sight of which I dearly loved. Here I was happier than in Rome; but I felt a void in my existence, a craving in my heart, which made me restless and melancholy. In fact, I was in love with my unknown preserver.

"Often I passed hours in scrutinising every passer-by from the balcony of my window, hoping vainly to obtain a glimpse of the man whose image was engraven upon my heart. If I saw a boat or any small craft upon the sea, I searched eagerly, by the aid of my telescope, among crew and passengers for the form of my idol.

"I did not dream in vain. Sitting alone in my balcony one evening, wrapped in gloomy thoughts, and contemplating almost involuntarily the moon as she rose slowly above the Pontine marshes, I was startled from my reverie by the noise

of something dropping to the ground from the wall surrounding the villa. My heart began to beat violently, but not from fear. I fancied I saw by the dim light a figure emerging from the shrubbery towards me. A friendly ray from the moon illumined the face of the intruder as he approached, and when I beheld the features I had sought for so many days in vain I could not repress a cry of surprise and joy, and it required all my womanly modesty to restrain a violent desire to run down the steps leading to my balcony and embrace him.

"My love of solitude, and my disdain for the pleasures of the capital had kept me in comparative ignorance of worldly things, and, with good principles, I had remained an ingenuous, simple daughter of nature.

"'Irene,' said a voice which penetrated to the inmost recesses of my soul; 'Irene, may I dare ask for the good fortune to say two words to you, either there or here?'

"To descend appeared to me to be more convenient than to permit him to enter the rooms; I therefore went down imme-

diately, and, forgetting, for the moment, his fine speeches, in joy, he covered my hands with burning kisses. Conducting me towards some trees, we sat down upon a wooden bench under their shady branches side by side. He might have led me to the end of the world at that strange and sweet moment had he pleased.

"For a while we remained silent; but presently my deliverer said, 'May I ask pardon for this boldness—will you not grant it my loved one?' I made no reply, but allowed him to take possession of my hand, which he kissed fervently. Presently he went on, 'I am only a plebeian, Irene—an orphan. Both my parents perished in the defence of Rome against the foreigner. I possess nothing on this earth but my arms, and my love for you, which has made me follow your footsteps.'

"Predisposed to love him, even before I had heard his voice, now that his manly yet gentle and impassioned tones fell upon my ear, I felt he might do what he would with

me—I was in an Eden. Yes, he belonged to me, and I to him; but I could not find the voice to say so as yet.

"'Irene,' he continued, 'I am not only a portionless orphan, but an outlaw, condemned to death, and pursued like a wild beast of the forest by the bloodhounds of the Government. Yet I have presumed to hope that you might be gentle to me for my love, with the strength of your generous nature; and more so, alas! when I saw that you were unhappy, for I have watched you unseen, and noted with sorrow and hope the melancholy expression of your face. I am come, though your sweet kindness flatters me, Irene, to tell you these things which make it impossible, of course, that you can ever be mine. I have no claim or right but my ardent love; the small services I have rendered you have blessed me, and made me proud and happy; therefore you owe me nought of gratitude. If I should ever have the delight of laying down my life for yours, my happiness will then, indeed, be complete. Adieu, Irene, farewell!'

he continued, rising and pressing my hand to his heart, while he turned to leave me.

"I had remained in an ecstacy of silent joy, forgetful of the world, of myself, of all save him. At the word 'farewell,' I started as if electrified; I ran to him, crying 'stay, oh, stay!' and clasping him by the arm, drew him back to the bench, and quite forgetting all reserve myself, exclaimed, 'Thou art mine, and I am thine for life! thine, yes, thine for ever, my beloved!'

"He told me all his story—he pictured to me the hope and aim of his life. His burning words of love for Italy and hatred of her tyrants added to my strength of resolve. I replied, that I would share his fortunes forthwith as his wife, and with no regrets, except upon my father's account. It was then arranged that we should live here together. A few days of preparation, and we were privately married. I followed my Orazio to the forest, where ever since I have dwelt with him. I will not say I am perfectly happy—no; but my only grief is the remembrance that my disappearance

accelerated, I fear, at least in a measure, the death of my aged and affectionate parent."

Tired as our poor Silvia was, she could not but listen with interest to the narrative of Irene, down whose beautiful cheeks the tears coursed at the mention of her father's name. Clelia, too, had not lost a single word, and more than one sigh from her fair bosom seemed to say, during her hostess's recital, "Ah, my Attilio! is he not also handsome, valorous, and worthy of love, yes, of my love!" But now, wishing repose to her guests, Irene bade them good-night.

CHAPTER XXXI.

GASPARO.

The history of the Papacy is a history of brigands. From the mediæval period robbers have been paid by that weak and demoralising Government to keep Italy in a state of ferment and internal war; and at this very day it makes use of thieves to hold her in thraldom and hinder her regeneration, or drives honest men to the wilds. I repeat, then, that the history of the Papacy is a history of brigands.

Whoever visited Civita Vecchia in 1849 must have heard of Gasparo, the famous leader of a band of brigands, a relative of the Cardinal A——. Indeed, many persons paid a visit to that city simply for the purpose of beholding so extraordinary a man.

Gasparo, at the head of his band, had

long defied the Pontifical Government, and sustained many encounters with the gendarmes and regular troops, whom he almost invariably defeated and put to flight.

Failing to capture the brigand by force of arms, the Government had recourse to stratagem. As I have already stated, Gasparo was related to a cardinal, one of the most powerful at Court; and as they were both natives of S——, where many of their mutual relations resided, these relations were made use of by the Government to act as mediators between it and the brigand, to whom it made several splendid offers.

Gasparo, putting faith in the promises made by his kinspeople at the instance of the Government, disbanded his men, but was then shamefully betrayed, arrested, and taken in chains to the prison in Civita Vecchia, where he was found during the Republican period in 1849.*

Prince T——, the brother of Irene, having obtained some clue, through the

* See Note 5.

shepherds, whose description of a beautiful dweller in the forest left little doubt upon his mind as to her identity, consulted with the Cardinal A——, and determined at any cost to recover his sister.

Although backed by the Government, and authorised to make use of the regiment which he commanded, the Prince, from his ignorance of the many hidden recesses in the forest, did not feel at all certain of success; and in his dilemma applied to the Cardinal to secure for him the services of the prisoner Gasparo, his relative, as a guide.

"It is a good thought," said the Cardinal; "Gasparo is better acquainted with every inch of the forest than we are with the streets of Rome. Besides, they say, that such are his olfactory powers, that by taking a handful of grass, and smelling at it, even at midnight, he could tell you what portion of the forest you were in. He is old now, it is true; but he has courage enough still to face even the devil himself."

When Gasparo heard he was to be conducted to Rome, he gave himself up for lost, and said to himself, "Better were it to die at once, for I am tired of this miserable existence; only then I should go to my grave unrevenged for the treachery and injury I have suffered at the hands of these villanous priests."

Two squads of gendarmes, one on foot, and the other mounted, conducted this formidable brigand from Civita Vecchia to Rome. The Government would have preferred removing him at night, but darkness would have facilitated his rescue, which it was feared some of his old companions might attempt if they heard of his journey. It was therefore decided Gasparo should travel by day, and the road was thronged by so dense a multitude, who pressed forward to gaze at the celebrated chieftain, that the progress of the Pope could scarcely have attracted greater numbers.

Arrived in Rome, Gasparo was afterwards introduced into the presence of his relative, Cardinal A——, and the Prince T——,

who with many words, and promises of a large reward in gold, to all appearance prevailed upon him to assist them in destroying the bands of "libertines" by which the forest was infested.

Rejoicing in such a chance of escape and opportunity for revenge upon his persecutors, Gasparo affected to be delighted at the proposition, and consented to it with much apparent pleasure.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE SURPRISE.

Silvia, Clelia, and Jack had passed several days very pleasantly in the Castle of Lucullus, as the guests of Orazio and Irene.

Among Orazio's band were several well-connected men, whose friends in the city, unknown to the Government, sent them regularly sums of money, which enabled them to supply the table of their chief. The gallantry of the young Romans to the "Pearl of Trastevere" was profound. Clelia would have been more glad, though, to have had her Attilio at her side. And Silvia, the gentle Silvia, sighed when she remembered the uncertain fate of her Manlio. But the two ladies were nevertheless well pleased. As for Jack, he was the happiest being on earth, for Orazio had presented him with

one of the carbines taken from the brigands who had assaulted Manlio and his party; and it was inseparable from him in all his hunting and reconnoitring excursions in the woods.

One day Orazio took the sailor with him to seek a stag, and directed Jack to beat, whilst he placed himself in ambush. Their arrangements were so effective, that, in less than half an hour, a hart crossed Orazio's path. He fired, and wounded him, but not mortally; he therefore fired a second time, and, with a cry, the noble animal fell.

As he discharged his second shot, Orazio heard a rustling in the bushes near him. Listening for a second, he was convinced some one was approaching from the thickest part of the cover. Jack it could not be; he was too far off to have returned so quickly.

A suspicion that he was to be the object of an attack caused him to curse his incaution as he looked at the empty barrels of his carbine. He appeared not mistaken;

for, hardly had he placed the butt-end of his gun upon the ground in order to reload it, than a head, more like that of some wild creature than a human being, was thrust from between the bushes.

To the valorous fear is a stranger, and our Roman, who was truly brave, sprang forward, dagger in hand, to confront the apparition, which, however, exclaimed, "Hold!" in such a tone of authority and *sang-froid*, that Orazio fell back astonished, and paused.

The stranger was armed from head to foot, and had, as we have said, a striking appearance. His head, covered with a tangled mass of hair, white as snow, was surmounted by a Calabrian hat; his beard was grizzled, and as bristly as the chine of a wild boar, concealing almost the whole of his face, out of which, nevertheless, glared two fiery eyes. Held erect and placed upon magnificent shoulders, years had not bowed nor persecution subjugated that daring front. His broad chest was covered by a dark velvet vest; around his

waist was buckled the inseparable cartridge-box. A velvet coat, and leather gaiters buttoned at the knee, completed his costume.

"I am not your enemy, Orazio," said Gasparo—for it was he—"but am come to warn you of an approaching danger, which might prove your ruin, and that of your friends."

"That you are not my enemy I am assured," replied Orazio; "for you might, had you chosen, have killed me before I found a chance of defending myself. I know well that Gasparo can handle a gun skilfully."

"Yes," answered the bandit, "there was a time when I needed not to fire many second shots at deer or wild boar, but now my eyes are beginning to fail me; yet I shall not be behind my companions when the time for attacking the common enemy arrives. But let us talk a while, for I have important news to communicate to you."

Seating himself upon the trunk of a

fallen tree, Gasparo related to Orazio the projects of the Papal court, aided by Prince T—— at the head of his regiment; and how he himself had been sent for, from confinement, to assist the Prince in discovering the retreat of the "Liberals;" also how, burning to be revenged upon the priestly Government, he had effected his escape, and now offered his services, and those of his adherents, to Orazio, on the simple condition of being accepted amongst the "Liberals" as one of their band.

"But, Gasparo, you have so many serious crimes to answer for, if the reports about you be true, that we could not possibly admit you into our company," observed Orazio.

"Crimes!" repeated the friendly brigand; "I own no crimes but those of having purged society from some bloody and powerful villains and their wicked agents. Is that a crime? and is it a crime to have helped the needy and the oppressed? or do you believe that, if I

had been a mere paltry criminal, the Government would have been in such awe of me, or that I should have been so beloved by the populace? The Government fears me because I have no sin upon my soul but resentment against its wickedness, and because it is conscious of having betrayed me in a cowardly and deceitful manner, and that, when I return once more to my free life, I shall make it pay dearly for its deceit and treachery.

"Yes, I have sometimes," he continued, after a pause, "made use of my carbine as an instrument of justice, in accordance with the laws of humanity and of righteousness. Can the priests say as much of their accursed scaffold?"

Jack arriving at this moment, Orazio explained by signs that the stranger was friendly; and, after making preparations to carry off the game, they returned with Gasparo to the castle, to equip themselves against the approaching assault.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE ASSAULT.

The Prince having ascertained from other spies — who proved more docile than Gasparo—that the band of "Liberals" were occupying the castle of Lucullus, made active arrangements to besiege it; and, after approaching the place, disposed his men in such a manner that it might be surrounded on all sides, so that escape from it in any direction should be impossible. The brother of Irene—like many other generals—committed the error of spreading his men over a large space of ground, and detaching a number of sentinels, pickets, videttes, and scouts, so as to leave himself with too small a body against assailants. Not knowing the exact site of the castle, Prince T—— had sent Gasparo on to explore, who took advantage of his

freedom, as the reader is aware, to desert to the threatened little garrison. Impatient at his prolonged absence, the Prince commanded his officers to cause their men—about a thousand strong—to narrow the circle, and to assault the castle when each column arrived in sight of it. As might be expected, so complex a scheme proved unfortunate. The detachment to the north, commanded by the Prince in person, marched in a straight line for the tower; but the others, partly through the ignorance of the officers, and partly through the disinclination of the guides to begin the affray, instead of following the right path, struck out into the wood, and were soon in inextricable confusion, calling hither and thither to each other, and often returning to the point from which they started. In this way several hours were lost.

The Prince, with two hundred of his most serviceable men, arrived, however, within sight of the spot, which they only discovered about four o'clock in the after-

noon, and then perceived, to their chagrin, that preparations for defence had been made. But reckoning on the numbers of his troops, and on the co-operation of the other detachments, he drew his sword, disposed of half his men as skirmishers, and keeping the other half as a reserve, ordered the signal to be given for attack.

Orazio and his young Romans could have avoided the combat by taking refuge in the subterranean passages, but disdaining a retreat before measuring strength with the Papal mercenaries, he determined to show fight, and upon returning to the castle with Gasparo, hastened to have the doors barricaded and holes made in the walls for the musketeers, while every necessary instrument was put in readiness for the siege.

The young leader had ordered his men not to fire at the enemy so long as they were at a distance, but to wait until they were close under the walls, so that each might shoot down his man. The assailants advanced boldly on the castle, and the front

rank of skirmishers had nearly reached the threshold, when a general discharge from the guns of those within laid nearly as many of the Papal troops on the ground as there were shots fired. This sudden discharge disconcerted those behind, who, seeing so many of their comrades fall, turned and fled. The Prince, with his column, was treading sharply on the heels of the skirmishers, and arrived at this juncture.

Orazio had taken the precaution to have all the spare fire-arms in the tower loaded and placed ready for use, and now commanded the domestics to help the ladies to reload them as soon as they were discharged. Jack, however, declined to remain with the women, as Orazio had proposed, and seizing his musket, placed himself at the side of his preserver, following him like a shadow throughout the attack.

When the Prince arrived under cover of the outer mound, and saw the slaughter that had taken place, he understood at last the disposition of the enemy with whom he

had to deal. Remarking the fear depicted on the countenances of his men, and perceiving that retreat under such a murderous fire would be disastrous, to say nothing of the disgrace of such a movement, he resolved to storm the wall. He passed the word, accordingly, to the aides-de-camp, by whom he was surrounded, to order the trumpets to sound the charge; and, springing forward himself, he was the first to climb the barricade, striking right and left with his sabre at the few defenders posted there.

Orazio, who was among these few, stood without moving at the first sight of the Prince, in whose lineaments he traced so plainly the likeness to his beloved Irene. One of the barrels of his musket was still undischarged, and he could easily have sent the contents through the body of his enemy, but he refrained. Jack, who was fighting by his side, not understanding the cause of this hesitation, raised his gun to a level with the Prince's breast and fired; but as he did so Orazio knocked up the muzzle with all the force of his strong arm, and

the ball struck one of the Prince's men, who had just appeared above the barricade. The Prince's followers who mounted with him were few in number, and those few were quickly despatched by the valiant garrison of the castle.

An unexpected circumstance finally freed our party from their assailants, and made them fly in every direction, scattered like a flock of sheep.

As the officers were urging the men crowded under the barricades to follow the Prince, a cry of "Enemies in the rear!" was heard from the east side of the wood. A small band of ten men appearing, sprang like lions on the right flank of the little army. The soldiers, in the panic, thinking the "ten" might be a hundred, dispersed like chaff before the wind. Some few paused, hoping that the new-comers would prove some of their own missing allies, but upon a nearer view it was plain that they were dressed in the uniform of the Liberals, and the blows they dealt upon the nearest Papalini were so terribly in earnest, that these

latter turned and fled in dismay, leaving their opponents masters of the field, and the Prince a prisoner. Realising the generous act of his enemy, and finding out that he was left alone, he delivered up his sword to Orazio, who received it courteously, and conducted him to the presence of Irene.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

A VALUABLE ACQUISITION.

The most earnest reformer must confess that immense progress has been made during the present century. We are not speaking of mechanical or physical arts—in which the advance is really wonderful—but we are thinking solely of the political and moral achievements of the age.

The emancipation of the nations from the power of the priest is a vast object not yet attained, but towards the accomplishment of it, nevertheless, our generation is making gigantic strides.

Above all, this progress seems marvellous and divinely impelled, when one remembers that the gradual destruction of priestcraft is the work of the priesthood itself. What enduring consolidation would not the Papacy have obtained, had Pius IX.

but continued the system of reform with which he commenced his reign, and sincerely identified himself with the Italian nation! An overruling Providence, however, blinded the eyes of the wavering monk for the good of his unfortunate people, and left him to travel on the perverse and misguided road of his predecessors—that is to say, to trade away Roman honour and Christian spirit for the help of the foreigner, vilely selling the blood of his countrymen. The Italian nation, which might have been so well and long deceived, has now seen these impostors, the priests, walking with cross in hand at the head of the foreign troops pitted against Italian patriots. The writer has with his own eyes more than once witnessed priests leading the Austrians against the Liberals. To serve the Papacy, they have excited and maintained brigandage, devastating the southern provinces with horrible crimes, and fomenting by every means in their power the dissolution of national unity, so happily but hardly constituted.

Another sign of human progress in our

day is the closer tie establishing itself between the aristocracy and the people. There still exist some oligarchs everywhere, more or less callous, more or less insolent, who affect the arrogance and authority of former times, when the outrageous and intolerable feudal pretensions were in full force. But they are few in number, and the greater part of the nobility (noble not only by birth, but in soul) associate with us, and mingle their aspirations with ours.

To this last type belonged the brother of Irene, who undertook the unlucky military affair we related in the last chapter, in the idea of rescuing his beloved sister from the brigands, into whose hands he believed she had fallen an unwilling victim. But when he learned that those he had fought against were Romans of noble and lofty spirit, and very far from the assassins he had pictured, he did not fail to compliment the valour of his countrymen; and when he further learned that Orazio, to whose generosity he owed his life, was the legal husband of his sister, and that she

loved him so tenderly, his manner and opinion changed entirely.

These considerations had pleaded already in favour of Irene, who, upon seeing her brother, threw herself at his feet, clasping his knees, in a flood of tears, which flowed the faster at the remembrance of her dead father, whom he represented in face and voice.

The Prince, raising her gently, mingled his tears with hers, as he affectionately embraced her. Orazio, touched to the depths of his soul, was also affected, and taking the Prince's sword by the point, handed it back to him, saying, "So noble a soldier ought not to be deprived, even by accident, of his weapon." The Prince accepted it with gratitude, and shook the bronzed hand of this son of the forest amicably.

And Clelia! what had made her rush away from this charming scene? what had she heard amid the noise of the conflict? She had recognised the voice of her Attilio during the assault, and for her and him too this was a supreme moment. Yes, during

the battle, when the shouts of the new-comers made the arches of the castle ring again, Clelia distinguished her betrothed's accents. She threw down a gun which she was loading, and rushed to a balcony, whence she could survey the scene of action. For one second, through the smoke, she obtained a view of the face engraven upon her heart, but that second was sufficient to make her feel surpassingly happy. Attilio, indeed, it was, who, with Silvio, Muzio, and some other companions, had thus charged and scattered the Papal troops.

Silvio, it must be known, was well acquainted with the castle of Lucullus, where he had often been a guest, as well as an associate of Orazio in his hunting and fighting expeditions. Through him a communication was kept up between the Liberals in the city and those in the country. Before quitting Rome he had come to the determination of taking the field, and placing himself under Orazio's flag, and, as we have seen, he happily arrived with his associates

just in time to give the last blow to the Papal soldiers.

The gentle reader must himself imagine the joy in the castle caused by the arrival of friends who could contribute so powerfully to the safety of the proscribed. What interrogations! what embracings! what inquiries after parents, relatives, and friends! what new and happy hopes! what soft illusions, dreams of peace and rest!

"Oh, my own, my own!" whispered Clelia, when Attilio for the first time imprinted a kiss upon her beautiful brow, "thou art mine and I am thine, in spite of the wicked priests; in spite of the world!"

The smell of the gunpowder had perhaps turned her dear little head, so that we may pass over the slight indiscretion of such confessions. She should have been more coquettish, but she was a Roman girl, and her love was true. And is not true love sublime, heroic, such as these two happy beings bore to one another? Is it not the life of the soul, the incentive of all

that is noble, the civiliser of the human race?

The Liberals had a glorious acquisition in the person of Prince T——; he was entirely converted by the scenes he had witnessed, and the words which he heard; for, generous and brave by nature, he felt with shame the humiliation of his country, and desired to see her liberated from the bad government of the priest and the foreigner. Educated away from Rome, however, and moving in a different sphere from those patriots who held in their hands the plot of the Revolution, he had remained in ignorance of much that was passing, and had even accepted, at his father's desire, a post in the Pontifical army, which removed him farther than ever from the influence of our brave friends. But a film had now passed from his sight, and he discerned at last with clearer vision the greatness of his country's future, and how surely Italy—now divided into so many parts, despised and scorned by the world—would yet be re-united, and become one grand

and noble nation, looked up to and respected, as in the days of her past glory, as the patriotic Italians of all periods have ever dreamed and prayed she should be.

The Prince was enchanted with his new quarters and with his new companions, and vowed to himself to live and die for the sacred cause of his country.

Rich, powerful, and generous, he became in the future the strongest supporter of the proscribed; and they had reason to congratulate themselves for having put faith and hope in so noble a patriot, and one whom they had thus doubly conquered.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE AMELIORATION OF MANKIND.

Orazio having received and welcomed his friend and brethren, now began to think of their general safety. He therefore called aside Attilio and the Prince (who by this time had become firmly devoted to them and the national cause), and addressed them as follows:—

"It is true we have been victorious in our last encounter, and have vanquished you, Prince, whose noble conduct now conquers our hearts; but I fear that this castle has become too notorious for us to remain longer in it in safety. The Government will employ every means in its power to hunt us out of our retreat, and to destroy us, and is capable of sending a whole army with artillery to demolish these old walls. I do not, how-

ever, advise an immediate retirement, as the cardinals will require time to form projects and make arrangements; but it behoves us now to use all vigilance, and from this moment to ascertain the movements of the enemy and guard against surprise. As for yourself, Prince, you had better return to Rome; your presence here is not needed for the present, and there you may be of the greatest use to us. Let it be thought that you were set at liberty on parole, on condition that you would not bear arms against us, and then send in your resignation."

"Yes," replied the Prince, "I can be of more service to you in Rome, and I pledge my word of honour to be yours until death."

Attilio was of the same opinion, and added that Regola would advise them of the movements of the Pontifical troops. On the Prince desiring some secure means of remaining with them, Attilio presented him with a piece of paper—so small that it might easily be swallowed in case of

emergency — containing a line of recommendation for the Prince to Regola.

The rest of the day was devoted to the interment of the dead, of which there were not a few, and to tending the wounded, nearly all of whom were Papalini. Three of the Liberals only were wounded, and those not seriously. This proves that, in the strife of battle, the valorous run the least danger; and if the statistics of the field were referred to, it would be seen that fugitives lose more men than any army which stands its ground.

At midnight the Prince started for Rome. And who acted as his guide? Who, bu Gasparo, the veteran chief of the bandits in old times, now an affiliated Liberal, as he had proved in the last affray, in which he had done wonders with his unerring carbine.

I who write this am well persuaded of the truth of the perpetual amelioration of the human race. I am wholly opposed to the cynic and the pessimist, and believe with all my heart and soul in the

law of human progress by various agencies, under many forms, and with many necessary interruptions. Providence has willed that happiness shall be the final end of this sad planet and suffering race; but its decrees work slowly, and only by the submission of mankind to the higher law of light is happiness attainable. Not by miracles will men become regenerated. Voltaire has well said—

> "J'en ai vaincu plus d'un, je n'ai forcé personne,
> Et le vrai Dieu, mon fils,
> Est un Dieu qui pardonne."

If humanity does not improve along with the progress of knowledge, as it should do, the fault must lie with the various governments, for with kind treatment and judicious care, even the wild beasts of the forest become domesticated, and their fierce passions are tamed. What, then, may we not accomplish with the very lowest grade of mankind? But can anything be expected from a people kept purposely in ignorance, and reduced to misery by exactions, imposts, and taxes? We know

that these taxes and exactions are not, as it is stated, imposed upon the Romans for the defence of the state, or for the support and maintenance of national honour, but to fatten the Pontifical government and its multitude of parasites, who are to the people what vermin are to the body, or what the worm is to the corpse, and who exist only to plunder and devour. Who can deny that the people of Southern Italy were more prosperous in 1860 than at the present day, and is not the reason because they were better governed?

In those days brigandage was scarcely known; there were no prefects, no gendarmes, no bravos. Now, with the multitude of satellites existing in the South, who ruin Italian finance, anarchy, brigandage, and misery prevail. Poor people! They hoped, after so many centuries of tyranny, and after the brilliant revolution of 1860, to obtain in a reformed Government an era of repose, of progress, and of prosperity. Alas, it was but a delusion! "Put not your trust in princes," says Holy Writ.

Gasparo had baptised himself a Liberal in the blood of the oppressors. He was received by the young brigand with indulgence, and even enthusiasm; and entrusted, as already mentioned, with the mission of conducting Prince T—— out of the forest into the direct road to Rome.

The prediction of Orazio respecting the steps that would be taken by the Papal Government fulfilled itself exactly. After the reverse it had sustained at the castle of Lucullus, the bishops decided in council to send a large body of troops, with artillery, against this stronghold of the Liberals; and as it was thought they would not tarry long for such a descent, the resolution was to carry the assault into immediate execution.

With this in view, it was determined that not only the Papal, but also the alien troops at the service of the Pope, should be drawn upon for the expedition. A foreign general of note was called in to direct the enterprise, and everything was made ready with alacrity, that the critical

assault might be delivered on Easter Day, generally so propitious to the priests; who on that occasion, after their long fast, gorge even more than usual their capacious stomachs at the expense of their ignorant and superstitious flocks.

Orazio and his companions, meanwhile, were not sleeping, and received regular information from their friends in Rome of the plans and preparations made by the Pontifical Government, albeit it kept them as secret as possible. The first thing Orazio did was to explore the subterranean passages thoroughly. These were known, even to him and to a few of his comrades, only partially; but Gasparo, who had already returned from his mission, had had better opportunities of examining them, and, with his assistance, a thorough exploration was to be made.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE SUBTERRANEAN PASSAGES.

Among the wonders of the metropolis of the world the catacombs or subterranean vaults and passages are certainly not the least.

The first Christians, persecuted with atrocious cruelty by the pagan imperial government of Rome, sought refuge for safety occasionally in the catacombs; and sometimes, also, that they might assemble without incurring suspicion, in large numbers, to instruct themselves in the doctrines of their new religion. These subterranean passages were also undoubtedly the resort of fugitive slaves and other miserable beings, who sought refuge from the tyrannical government of imperial Rome, over which have presided some of the direst monsters that ever existed—Nero, Caligula, Heliogabalus, and other despots in purple.

Among these subterranean passages there are, it appears, different kinds. Some were constructed for the purpose of receiving the dead, others were used as water conduits, and supplied the city with rivers of fresh water for a population of two millions. The Cloaca Maxima, which led from Rome to the sea, is a famous example of many more smaller hidden roads, constructed by rich private individuals, at an enormous expense, in which they could secrete themselves from the depredations of those greatest of all robbers, the emperors, and in later times from the persecution and massacres of the barbarians.

The soil upon which Rome is built, as well as that in its immediate neighbourhood, offers great facilities to the excavator, being composed of volcanic clay, easy to pierce, yet sufficiently solid and impenetrable against damp to form a secure habitation. In fact, to this day many shepherds, with their flocks, lodge in these artificial caverns.

Before the exploration of the subterranean passages of the castle, it was

thought desirable to send the severely wounded to Rome, attended by those who were only slightly injured, and conducted by some shepherds. Among the Liberals very few were wounded, and none severely so. Many of the Papalini, moreover, requested permission to remain and follow the fortunes of the proscribed; for there are not many Italian soldiers, however debased, who willingly serve the priesthood; and there is no doubt that when the hour for liberating Italy and Rome from their pollution arrives, not a soldier, with the exception of the foreign mercenaries, will remain to protect them.

After despatching the wounded, Orazio and his men removed to the subterranean passages all that the castle contained which was valuable and useful, with provisions of all kinds to last for some time, and then awaited calmly the coming of the enemy. They did not fail to take all military precautions, and that in spite of the notices from Rome of every movement of the enemy. Orazio also sent scouts, and

placed sentinels in all directions, that he might be apprised at the earliest moment of their approach.

The original party had been considerably augmented by the arrival of Attilio and his followers, as well as by those of the Roman soldiers who had resolved to serve the priest no longer; not to mention certain youths from the capital, who, having heard of the victory won by the Liberals, determined forthwith to join them. They now numbered sixty individuals, without counting the women, while Orazio's authority over his band was increased rather than lessened by this addition, and Attilio, although at the head of the Roman party, and commander of the Three Hundred, showed the greatest fidelity in obeying the orders of his brave and warlike brother in arms.

Orazio divided his little army into four companies, under the command of Attilio, Muzio, Silvio, and Emilio the antiquary. The latter had been second in command before the advent of the chief of the Three Hundred, but made it a point of honour to

yield this post to him. A generous dispute ensued, which would never have ended, had not Orazio persuaded Attilio to accept the first command, and assigned the second to Emilio. Such was the disinterestedness of these champions of Rome's liberty! "Freedom for Rome or death!" was their motto. Little did they care for grades, distinctions, or decorations, which they, indeed, held as instruments used by despotism to corrupt one half of the nation, and humiliate and hold in bondage the other half.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE ANTIQUARY.

It was Easter Eve. Everything in the antique monument was in readiness for the siege, and those of the band who were not on duty were assembled with Orazio and the ladies in the spacious dining-hall. After a truly Homeric supper, which was enlivened by some patriotic toasts, Emilio the antiquary, who desired to put them on their guard against any contretemps that might arise, asked permission of his commander to speak a few words. Consent being given, Emilio began thus:—

"As we shall soon have to take refuge in the subterranean passages, I wish, by way of precaution, to narrate a circumstance that happened to me a few years ago in the vicinity of Rome. You all remember the superb mausoleum of Cecilia Metella,

erected by a Roman patrician in honour of his daughter, who died in her twelfth year.

"You know, too, that that mausoleum is beautiful among all our ruins, and, like the Pantheon, one of the best preserved. But what you do not, perhaps, know, is that under it is the opening to a subterranean passage, leading no one knows whither. One day I determined to investigate this dark place, and as, in my youthful folly and pride, I thought I should not have so much merit if I were accompanied by any one, I resolved to go alone. Providing myself with an immense ball of twine, so large that I could scarcely grasp it, and a bundle of tapers, some bread, and a flask of wine, I ventured out very early in the morning, descended into the bowels of the earth, having previously secured the end of my twine at the entrance to the tunnel, and commenced my mysterious journey. Onward, onward I went under the gloomy arches, and the further I went the more my curiosity was excited. It appeared

truly astounding to me that any human being destined by God to dwell upon the earth, and enjoy the fruits and blessed light of the sun, should ever have condemned himself to perpetual darkness, or have worked so hard, like the mole, to construct such a secure, but fearful habitation. Wretched, and bitterly terrified, although rich, must have been those who, at the cost of so much labour, excavated these gigantic works for hiding-places.

"While such thoughts were passing through my mind, I continued to walk, lighted by my taper, unrolling my ball at the same time, and endeavouring to follow in a direction originally indicated by the narrow passage at the entrance; but I discovered that the gloomy lane gradually widened, and was supported by columns of clay, from between which opened various alleys, spreading out in all directions. These were fantastically and unsymmetrically arranged, as if the architect had wished to involve any trespassers in an inextricable labryinth. The

observations I made troubled me somewhat, and I speak frankly when I say that I occasionally felt my courage failing me, and was several times on the point of turning back, but Pride cried, 'Of what use were these preparations if your expedition is to be a failure?'

"I felt ashamed of myself for my terror; besides, had I not my guiding thread that would lead me back to security? Onward I went again, unwinding my twine, and lighting, from time to time, a fresh taper, as each became consumed. At last I came to the end of my twine, and, much to my discontent, I had encountered nothing but a profound solitude. I was tired and rather discouraged at having such a long road to retrace. While I stood contemplating my position, and holding the end of the thread firmly, lest I should lose it, and anxiously regarding my last taper, which I feared every moment would be extinguished, I heard a rustling, as of a woman's dress, behind me, and, while turning round to discover the cause, a breath blew out my

light, some one tore the thread violently out of my fingers, and my arms were seized with such force that the very bones seemed to crack, while a cloth was thrown over my head, completely blinding me.

"A presentiment of danger is ofttimes harder to bear than the danger itself. I had felt very much terrified when I first heard the footsteps approaching me, but now that I was being led by the hand like a child, my fear fled: I had to do with flesh and blood. I walked boldly along. Although I was blinded, I was conscious another light had been struck, and that the touch and footsteps near me were those of living beings, and not of spirits. In this manner I proceeded for some minutes, and then the veil or bandage was removed from my eyes, and, to my amazement, I found myself in a small room, brilliantly illuminated, with a table in the centre splendidly laid out, around which sat twenty hearty fellows feasting merrily."

During the antiquary's narrative, a smile had passed over Gasparo's face from time

to time; now he rose, and extending his hand to Emilio, said, with some emotion—

"Ah, my friend, were you then that incautious explorer? I dwelt in the catacombs in those days with my band; and the emissaries of Rome, before venturing into them, generally made their wills, if prudent. The woman who blew out your light, and who afterwards showed you so much kindness, was my Alba, who died a short time since from grief on account of my sufferings and imprisonment."

"Oh!" exclaimed the antiquary, "was it you who sat at the head of the table, and received as much homage from your men as if you had been in reality a sovereign?"

"Yes, it was I," replied the bandit, somewhat mournfully, noting Emilio's surprise; "years and the irons and cruelties of those wretched men calling themselves ministers of God have wrinkled my forehead and silvered these hairs. But my conscience is pure. I have treated every unhappy creature kindly, and you know

whether you received any harm from us, or if even a hair of your head were touched. I wished only to humiliate those proud voluptuaries who live in luxury and vice at the expense of suffering humanity; and with God's help and yours, although I am old, I yet hope to see my country freed from their monstrous yoke."

"Yes," answered the antiquary, affectionately, "I received the greatest kindness from you and your lady. I shall never forget it as long as I live."

And then turning to the company, he continued his recital—

"I was much shaken by my solitary exploration, and a little, too, by my unexpected encounter; and was so feverish in consequence, that I was compelled to remain two days in the subterranean abode; and during that time I received, as you have heard, the greatest care, and the most delicate attentions from the amiable Alba, who not only provided me with every necessary, but watched assiduously by my pillow. Having regained my strength at

the end of the two days, I requested to be allowed to depart, and was conducted by a new and shorter road into the light of the sun, which I had thought never to see again. Upon giving my word of honour not to betray the secret of their existence, two of the band pointed out the road to Rome, and left me to pursue my way."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE ROMAN ARMY.

"Now opens before us," says a great writer on ancient Italy, "that splendid region in which man grew to grander stature than in any other part of the world, and displayed prodigies of energy and moral judgment. We are about to enter that land consecrated by heroic virtues, from which came a light of empire that illumined the universe. To that proud life has since succeeded deep death; and now in many places of ancient majesty you will find nought but ruins—monuments of departed grandeur amidst vast deserts of death—dreary solitude, and the decayed achievements of man. The city of the rulers of the world fell, but the remains of her past glories cannot be destroyed. They have for ages sent, and still send forth a mighty voice, which breaks the

silence of her grave, proclaiming the greatness of those ancient inhabitants. The country of the Latins is desolate, but grand in its desolation; an austere nature adds solemnity to the vacant sites of the cities, their sepulchres, and relics. In the midst of a wilderness, at every step, one meets with tokens of a bygone power that overawes the imagination. Frequently, in the same spot, on the same stone, the traveller reads the record of the joys and the sorrows of generations divided by prodigious intervals of time. Here, also, are to be seen the columns of those temples in which the priests of old, with their auguries and idols, deceived the people, and reduced them to moral slavery. In this, however, little is changed; for further on may be viewed modern temples, in which religion is still made an instrument of infamous tyranny. Sadnesses ancient and sadnesses modern blend together; memories of past dominations, and tokens of dominations ruling down to the present day.

"If the far-off cry of the wretched plebeians whom the savage aristocracy of a past age precipitated from the cliff, makes us shudder, shall we not feel something akin to this when we hear the cry of living victims of Popish fury imprisoned in dungeons in our own day? Mingled with the ashes of the leaders of the ancient people, you may here dig up those of the martyrs of our own age, who shed their blood for the new Republic, and fell protesting against the bitter dominion of the priesthood; and pondering over these memories, antique and recent, each true Roman may draw comfort for his afflicted soul, seeing that in spite of the passage of centuries, and the debasing strength of tyrannies, the children of Rome, far as they are from her heroic days, have never quite lost the energy of their forefathers, and thence, on this soil of auguries, each may rightly draw the joyful presage that now, as then, the genius of this sublime country will never long leave her to such shameful vicissitudes."

We have introduced this noble patriotic piece to aid in the difficult task of depicting the Rome of heroic times along with the living but paralysed virtues of modern Latium. We may thus proceed to discuss that strange and sad heterogeneous band, native and foreign, which forms what is called "the Roman army." What manner of men are those who dedicate themselves to the service of a government like that of "Pio Nono"—a service that cannot fail to inspire an honest man with disgust? And here, we may repeat, none but a priesthood could have so degraded a people, and placed them on a level with the basest upon earth—a people, too, born in a region where men have attained to greater perfection of manhood than in any other part of the known world.

The "Roman army," so called, is at present composed partly of Romans, under the observation of foreign soldiery, and partly of foreign soldiers under the sway of foreign commanders, while the people themselves are under the protection (or

rather subjection) of a set of scoundrels called gendarmes. For what are these hired mercenaries but knaves thirsting for profit, who, without principle and without honour, enter this disgraceful service? The title, therefore, of "Papal soldier" is by no means a martial distinction, but one despised by a true man; while, on the other hand, the foreign interloper, scoundrel though he be in embracing so dishonourable a calling, despises none the less the native soldiery, whom he is called upon to aid and abet. Hence, the native soldier and the foreign hireling (not being in the the true sense of the term *brothers* in arms) frequently come to blows, when the foreigner usually comes off second best, for, in spite of the influence of the priesthood to render the Roman soldiery degenerate and corrupt, some remains at least of their ancient valour still exist.

This is the condition of the Roman army of the day, and this the reason why it was despised by the "proscribed," who informed themselves of its move-

ments, and quietly waited its approach. In the case of the impending assault upon Orazio's castle, time was lost by the quarrels which prevailed as usual in it. The foreigners, looking with contempt upon the native soldiers, claimed to have the right wing in the assault assigned them; but the natives, not fearing the foreigners, and believing themselves, with reason, to be superior to them in the art of war, resolutely refused to concede this honour to alien troops. The priests, too impotent to restore order, begun to gnaw their nails at such junctures with impatience, rage, and fear.

Easter day, then—the day destined for the destruction of "the brigands"—would most probably have seen the extermination of these mercenaries had not the "Moderates" raised the cry of "Order and brotherhood!" And thus this fine opportunity for finishing off a set of knaves—the plague and dishonour of Italy—was lost.

Regola, with the greater number of the

Three Hundred, seeing they could do nothing of themselves, for some time, towards the liberation of Rome, had enlisted in the ranks of the Pontifical troops—according to the orders received from outside—and were active in influencing the Romans to demand the honour of conducting the right wing in the order of march. This being disputed, they mutinied, and ill-treated their officers. General D—— was sent with a company of foreigners to restore order, but the strife was almost as serious as in a pitched battle, and the foreigners fled discomfited to their barracks.

The chief instigator of the mutiny was our old acquaintance, Dentato, the sergeant of dragoons. Being released from the pains and penalties inflicted upon him by the Inquisition, which he had sustained with a stoicism worthy of the olden times, he resolved to be revenged upon his persecutors at the first opportunity, and did not fail to make good use of this occasion. At the head of his

dragoons (for he had been restored to his post), sabre in hand, he plunged into the thickest of the fray, and made serious havoc amongst the foreign troops. The affair over, knowing what to expect at the hands of his masters, he set out from Rome without dismounting, accompanied by the better part of his men, sought out the proscribed in the forest, who received him most cordially, and heard with satisfaction the account of his adventures in the capital.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

MATRIMONY.

Of a surety the most holy and the closest tie in all the human family is marriage. It binds together two beings of an opposite sex for life, and makes them, if they be but worthy of that condition, supremely happy. We say if they be worthy advisedly, because that solemn rite should only be contracted with the mutual purpose that each is to seek the happiness of the other, and such a union has for its base true love—that is, celestial love—which the ancients rightly distinguished from sensual passion, the former being that love of the soul which no worldly or selfish views can ever influence. Even before the marriage contract its anticipation does much to soften and improve the character of each, from the new feeling that they must not fail to contribute to each other's

welfare. The very atmosphere of happiness makes married life nobler than lonely life, while the love of parents for their offspring renders them gentle and forbearing, and indulgent to their own first; and finally to others, whose good-will they wish to win. Unfaithfulness, however, is, unhappily, too frequently an incident of modern marriages, but those of either sex who sin against that loyalty in wedlock, which should bind both indissolubly, unless hardened in vice beyond all hope, feel such remorse that they would, if they could, return to their former purity by any sacrifice. But truth, among other things, should suffice to fortify the good against temptation and dishonour, which brings shame and ruin to the soul. Oh, you whom this sacred tie has newly bound, be true as Heaven to one another! By your fidelity you will secure your conscience in the future against sharp and stinging reflections. Out of noble and heart-felt constancy will spring a paradise upon earth, —the foretaste of a blissful life beyond.

But priestly interference in this holy communion of hearts blights and blasphemes the name of love, sowing the seeds of hatred; while this plague is felt more or less all over the globe, by reason of the number of unhappy marriages brought about or directed by these busy tonsured meddlers. What, then, must this baneful influence be in Rome, where the priests are so numerous as to reign almost supreme in society?

We have before stated that in the city of Rome the largest number of illegitimate births takes place, which arises naturally (or rather *un*naturally) from the infamous influence of priests, who traffic in matches, and control the market of men and women for their own profit.

But we will draw the veil of silence over these lamentable facts, and ask pardon of refined readers if we have shocked them, even by a hint. Nevertheless, when we remember the degradation and misery to which our beloved but unhappy country has been reduced by the despotism and

corruption of her clerical Government, shame and grief are hard to restrain. Oh, pardon me, you whose chaste eyes have no Rome to weep for!

Yes, marriage is a sacred act. By it a man imposes on himself the duty to love, protect, and support his wife, and the children she may bear him. And this act is the first cause of the progress and civilisation of mankind. The priest, being no other than a meddler and impostor, is consequently unworthy of celebrating that most important act of life. The municipal authorities, who ought to be cognisant of all that concerns the citizens, and register all acts, should preside at the ceremony of marriage, or, as immediate representatives of these, the parents of the contracting parties, who are their natural and lawful guardians.

To these latter authorities Attilio and Clelia referred themselves.

"My own! my own!" Clelia had whispered to herself during Irene's narration; and in the hour when her beloved was at

her feet, overjoyed by the blissful atmosphere that surrounded her, she resisted his passionate and honest solicitations for some time, but at last gave him permission to demand her in marriage of her mother, adding, "If she consents, I will be thine for life."

Although Silvia was of a somewhat hesitating temperament, and would have preferred having her Manlio at hand to consult as to the destiny of her dearly beloved child, still she had sufficient good sense to see that a union between the two ardent lovers was very desirable, and felt that, under the peculiar circumstances of their banishment and forest life, she might be assured of her husband's sanction, and therefore accorded them hers.

Silvia could not endure priests, and civil authorities there were none to consult or employ, except the sylvan jurisdiction of their honest preserver, Orazio, and her own maternal governance. These, she opined, were sufficient for the occasion, and it was not difficult to persuade her

bold but gentle and enlightened conscience that this simple, natural, and legal solemnisation was all that was requisite.

The celebration of the marriage of our young friends, thus determined upon and permitted, was a true feast for all in the castle, and particularly for Irene, who, as the happy example herself of a rural marriage, was thoroughly proud of being priestess to the natural and noble rite. She erected, without their knowledge, an altar at the foot of the most majestic oak in the neighbourhood. With the help of her maidens, and the sailor's assistance—who prided himself upon his marine agility—Irene reared above this a small temple, formed of green boughs and garlands of wild flowers, the crown of the oak serving as a cupola, illuminated far above by the sun, and at night by beautiful stars and planets, the first-born creations of God.

The ceremony was not long, for it was simple, but serious. It took place in the presence of those faithful children of Rome,

who stood in a circle around the handsome couple, while Irene joined their right hands, pronounced them to be man and wife, and solemnised the sacred union by the following address :—

"Dear and true-hearted friends, the act you have solemnised this day unites you indissolubly body and soul. You must share together henceforward the prosperities and reverses, the joys and sorrows of this life. Remember that in mutual love and faithfulness you will find your only and enduring happiness, while, if affliction descends, it will be diminished and dissipated by your reciprocal love. May God bless your union!"

Then Silvia, her eyes bedewed by maternal tears, placed her hands upon the heads of her beloved children, and repeated *che Dio vi benedica!* More she could not say for her emotion. The marriage contract, which had been previously prepared, was now presented to the united couple by Orazio for their signature, and then to the witnesses, the chief finally signing it himself.

In this manner was celebrated, with the greatest order and propriety, in the Almighty's own temple, illuminated by the bright golden lamp of all the world, that solemn act of wedlock, none the less solemn or binding for being so celebrated. Never did human pair feel themselves more sacredly bound one to the other than Clelia and Attilio.

From the altar our joyful party directed their steps towards the castle, where a right goodly woodland banquet awaited them. All were rejoiced at the auspicious event, and many joyous toasts were given. Patriotic songs were freely sung, and Jack, elated by the general hilarity, treated his friends to his own famous national airs, "God Save the Queen," and "Rule Britannia."

CHAPTER XL.

THE SEAGULL'S CRUISE.

THE "army of Rome," as already related, gave the proscribed a long time for preparation, and they, knowing the nature of the delay, troubled themselves little about the matter. And now we must return to some of the principal and most cherished personages of our book—namely, Julia and her companions, of whom we took leave when they escaped so narrowly from the storm, and whom we have neglected far too long.

Two days after the departure of the *Seagull* from Porto d'Anzo she entered Porto Longone, with all her sails set, and her colours flying. As soon as she anchored, our friends saw a group of persons issuing from Liberi, a small village overlooking the port, who, on reaching the shore, embarked in a boat and rowed out to the yacht.

Julia received the party—which was composed of both sexes—gracefully and courteously, and offered them refreshments in her saloon, which they cordially accepted.

Seated at table, each with a glass of Marsala in hand, the guests turned towards Manlio, whom they imagined to be the master of the vessel, and addressed him with a Tuscan accent. It is one less manly than the Roman, but sweeter and more sympathetic, and though it be but a dialect of the real Italian, to it Italy owes much of her revival; and in this dialect, dignified by so much genius, must be found the language of Italian national unity.

"Sir," said the elder of the visitors, talking Tuscan, "in Liberi there exists a custom that if a vessel comes into port at the same time birth is given to an infant, the captain is requested to stand godfather to the newly-born child. Will you therefore vouchsafe to comply with this custom, and do us the honour of becoming a godfather, and your gracious young lady a

godmother, to a little one who has this day entered upon existence?"

Manlio smiled at this odd request, and all present admired the facility with which the visitor in Elba can form an alliance with the islanders. Manlio replied, "I am simply a guest on board, like yourself, Signor; this young English lady is the owner of the vessel, and must decide what shall be done."

Julia—the traveller, the artist, the antiquary, and the friend of Italian liberty—was enchanted to find such simplicity of manners among these good people, and said, "For my part I gladly accede to your proposal, and as I hear the captain of the ship must be godfather, I will send for him, when, if he be agreeable, we will place ourselves at your service."

Captain Thompson was immediately summoned, and the English lady explained to her commander what was required. He laughed merrily, and accepted the invitation as she had done, declaring that he should feel immensely honoured to stand

godfather with his charming mistress as godmother. Captain Thompson then gave his orders to the mate, and all embarked in company for Liberi.

Here our narrative stumbles again upon the topic of the priesthood, and it is a fatality that, in spite of the invincible antipathy which they excite in us, they are thus continually coming in contact with the progress of our tale. But the curé of Liberi was a man of a different stamp.

A modest but hospitable table was spread for the christening party in the house of the islanders, and it was made pleasant by the cordiality and simplicity of these kind islanders. The guests were all delighted, while Captain Thompson, although a little confused, was happy beyond measure at the honour the beautiful Julia did him by leaning on his arm, and still more so at being sponsor to her godchild. So elated was the worthy seaman that he neither heard or saw as they walked towards the village, and, stumbling over some obstacle

in the way, had well nigh fallen, and, to use his own phrase, "carried away his bowsprit."

Luckily Julia did not perceive the profound confusion of her companion, and walked on with a calm and stately demeanour, in unintentional contrast to the tar's awkward gait, for the excellent Thompson, dreading another stumble, counted every stone on the road as he paced by her side.

In this manner they arrived at the church. Captain Thompson here put on a very imposing appearance, and, although a little wearied by the inordinate length of the ceremony, gave no sign of impatience. Having an excellent disposition, the tediousness was relieved by the pleasure of holding his new godson in his strong arm, to which, although a plump and well-formed babe, it appeared but as light as a feather.

The ceremony ended, the guests invited to the christening bent their steps to the house of the second godfather, who enter-

tained them at a more formal banquet, the excellent wine of Liberi receiving much favour. Captain Thompson, having to re-conduct Julia, and remembering the stumble, partook very moderately of the liquor, contenting himself with passing a disinterested eulogy upon it.

The captain had another motive for being temperate and keeping in check his decided predilection for good drink. He was most anxious to please the Signora Aurelia, who, though past the bloom of youth, was extremely amiable, and had a brilliant complexion. She was full of gratitude for the many attentions the captain had lavished upon her during the terrible storm, and by no means repulsed the signs of sympathy, loyal and honest, if not courtly, which the gallant sailor manifested.

All went very merrily for our amphibious friends, for, much as one may resemble a sea-horse in constitution, land with its pastimes and comforts is always preferable to the tempestuous sea. On leaving, Julia

was covered with blessings and thanks by her new acquaintances, after the manner of olden times.

Manlio was meditating over a statue in marble, which he determined to carve when he should return to Rome, representing the beautiful Julia as Amphitrite guiding a stumbling Triton. Aurelia and Thompson, absorbed in thoughts of tenderness, were oblivious of the incidents of the past; and thus our yachting party returned on board, accompanied to the shore by all the villagers, with music and joyful hurrahs.

END OF VOL. I.

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